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A Mixed Methods Study of the Intersection of Sexual Orientation and Spiritual Development in the College Experience

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ABSTRACT

A MIXED METHODS STUDY OF THE INTERSECTION OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

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Old Dominion University, 2015
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This two-phase, exploratory sequential mixed methods study explored the intersection of lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning (LGBQQ) sexual orientation and spiritual development for college students. The first phase entailed a phenomenological study exploring the lived experiences of LGBQQ former college students (N= 10) concerning how their sexual orientation influenced, if at all, their spiritual development during college. Findings from this qualitative phase were used to develop a quantitative instrument to explore the spiritual-sexual orientation development of college students further (N= 171). This study provides suggestions for working with LGBQQ college students for college counselors and student affairs professionals working with this population.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This chapter will provide an overview of the concept of spiritual development for college students and discuss how sexual orientation may be an influencing factor requiring special attention from college counselors and student affairs professionals tasked with promoting the healthy development of college students. This chapter will first explore the general background of the problem and discuss counselor competencies, identity development issues, and special considerations for college students regarding spiritual development and non-heterosexual orientation. This chapter will also explain the rationale for the study, which will involve a two-phase process of qualitative data collection leading to development of a quantitative instrument to assess results within a larger population. Additionally, this chapter will explain the research questions and discuss study delimitations before concluding with the potential contributions of this dissertation to college counseling and student affairs settings.

Throughout the literature reviewed in this dissertation, the terms *sexual orientation* and *sexual identity* are frequently used interchangeably by scholars to discuss individuals' sexual and/or romantic attractions. Sexual orientation is a component of sexual identity, and the terms are related (ALGBTIC, 2012; Love et al., 2005; Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2011). Included in this chapter is a list of defined terms clarifying the difference between sexual orientation and sexual identity and detailing other significant terms. The term sexual orientation was given preference in this dissertation as sexual identity is a more complex concept that includes behaviors and public sexual identity beyond attraction (Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2011). This dissertation was

primarily concerned with the sexual orientation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning (LGBQQ) individuals.

In professional counseling and related educational scholarship areas, the subject of spirituality within the life of college students has developed as a topic of academic interest over the past decade (Fisler et al., 2009; Hartley, 2004). Specifically, there has been a growing body of literature exploring the association between spirituality and college experience for students (Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis, Muller, Miller, & Banerjee, 2004; Hartley, 2004; Lindholm, 2007; Rockenbach, Walker, & Luzander, 2012). These scholars concluded that spirituality and spiritual development are important factors to promote for college students, no matter the individual differences in religious identity, definitions of spirituality, or the specific religious or spiritual practices of students. For example, Astin, Astin, and Higher Education Research Institute (2003) surveyed 3,680 college students from diverse backgrounds and colleges and found that more than half of the students surveyed perceived that it was important to integrate spirituality into their lives.

Although spirituality, spiritual development, and spiritual competence have been growing research topics for professionals working with college students, frequently overlooked in this body of literature are those students who identify as LGBQQ (Lindholm, 2007; Robertson, 2010). Many current and historical models of spiritual development do not specifically take sexual orientation into account as a potential identity development aspect (Allport, 1950; Fowler, 1981; Friedman, Krippner, Reibel, & Johnson, 2010; Underhill, 1961; Washburn, 2003; Wiggins-Frame, 2003; Wilber, 1980). Some researchers have begun to identify the importance of including the voices of

LGBQQ people in studies of spirituality and exploring the connections between sexual orientation and spiritual identity; however, the majority of these studies looked at adults without taking into account their college experience (Kocet, Sanabria, & Smith, 2011; LePeau, 2007; Rodriguez & Follins, 2012).

Concurrently, researchers have been building a case via quantitative and qualitative research for the inclusion of spirituality in student affairs programming at colleges as a means to promote holistic health over the past decade (Dennis et al., 2004; Holmes, Roedder, & Flowers, 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms, Hutchins, Hutchins, & Pursley, 2007). The spiritual lives and health of LGBQQ college students are as relevant a topic of research as the spiritual lives and health of heterosexual students but many studies overlook this population in their research (Dennis et al., 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007). This exploratory sequential mixed methods study intended to broaden the dialogue on college student spirituality to be inclusive of LGBQQ voices, to highlight any special factors that LGBQQ college students may need for spiritual development, to quantitatively explore potential integration factors for sexual orientation and spiritual development on a larger scale, and to provide suggestions for college counselors and student affairs professionals working with this population.

Background of the Problem

To explore the importance of addressing the intersection of spiritual development and sexual orientation in college students, a general understanding of the problem must be addressed. Specifically, it is important to connect the value of spirituality as a factor in college students lives with the interest LGBQQ students may have in this topic through available faith and sexuality resources on campus. Additionally, it is important to explore

counselor competencies pertaining to both sexual orientation and spirituality issues, discuss the benefits of identity development, and explore special developmental considerations for college and LGBQQ students.

Spirituality and Sexual Orientation Resources

In 2011, the Institute of Medicine (IOM), a division of the National Academy of Sciences, issued a comprehensive report on the health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. This report concluded there continues to be great disparity in health research regarding these populations within the United States. Furthermore, the report concluded sexual minorities have unique health needs and experiences that are not fully known to the larger healthcare community (IOM, 2011). Of those studies which have addressed the health needs of this population, the impact of sexual orientation on health has not been sufficiently researched regarding subpopulations like the elderly, race/ethnicity, and young adults (IOM, 2011).

Additional research has overwhelmingly linked the positive benefits of religion and spirituality on mental and physical health for individuals (Koenig, 2012). Koenig (2012) conducted a meta-analysis of 3,300 quantitative research studies from the years 1872-2010 exploring the linkage between religion/spirituality and health. Approximately 80% of the reports analyzed by Koenig (2012) focused on connections between religion/spirituality and mental health and demonstrated positive benefits for clients who were more religious/spiritual. This meta-analysis indicated 14 areas showing benefit from clients' utilization of religion/spirituality. Those areas included trauma coping, hope, positive emotions, happiness/well-being, and self-esteem, in addition to clinical benefits for clients experiencing depression, anxiety, suicidality, psychotic disorders, and

substance abuse (Koenig, 2012).

Looking specifically at college student interest in spiritual development, Schmalzbauer (2013) reported roughly 250,000 college students nationwide participated in Protestant Christian campus religious ministries. Additionally, 1,351 Catholic, 361 Jewish, and over 500 Muslim campus organizations provided services to American colleges nationwide (Schmalzbauer, 2013). Numerous other campus organizations affiliated with diverse religious faiths (e.g., Hindu, Sikh, Unitarian Universalist) have a noticeable presence at colleges nationwide (Schmalzbauer, 2013). Additionally, Campus Pride (2014), the leading national organization for LGBQQ campus groups, currently lists 401 member colleges in America offering resources for this student population. Although it was not possible to verify the number of students this represents, there is a significant amount of campus resources available to sexual minority college students at a wide range of academic institutions, including community colleges, four-year private schools, and major public universities (Campus Pride, 2014). Additionally, the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals (2013) has a current membership of 588 campus leaders providing resources to sexual minority students nationwide. Combined, this information represents strong evidence to support the exploration of spirituality within the LGBQQ college student population.

Counselor Competencies

Professional counselors have highlighted the importance of exploring spiritual development and sexual orientation issues with clients in research (Powers, 2005; Young, Wiggins-Frame, & Cashwell, 2007). For example, Young et al. (2007) surveyed 505 members of the American Counseling Association (ACA) concerning their opinions of

spiritual competence and found the majority of respondents consider spiritual competence an essential skill for clinicians. Additionally, in a historical literature review of counseling and psychology scholarly articles going back to 1840, Powers (2005) demonstrated how spirituality has been rising in importance within the counseling field and taking its place as an essential component of holistic health for clients since the early 1970s.

Recently, scholars have made strong cases in a conceptual article (Whitman & Bidell, 2014), ethical position paper (Kaplan, 2014), and quantitative study (Bidell, 2014) calling for increased counselor competency for spiritual and sexual orientation issues. In a nationwide correlational quantitative study (n= 228), Bidell (2014) demonstrated how counselor competency in non-heterosexual orientation issues was negatively linked to religious fundamentalism for professional counselors, counselor educators, and counseling trainees. With regards to counselors, Bidell (2014) concluded counselors with conservative religious beliefs and values had significantly lower LGBQQ affirmative counseling competency when treating sexual minority clients. In response to the *Ward v. Wilbanks* legal case regarding the ability of conservative counselors to refer LGBQQ clients on the grounds of religious principles, some scholars (Kaplan, 2014; Whitman & Bidell, 2014) have supported an ethical obligation to competently address the intersection of spirituality and sexual orientation issues and to treat all clients, no matter the clients' sexual orientation or the personal values of counselors. Reflecting on the ACA ethical codes, Kaplan (2014) and Whitman and Bidell (2014) emphasized that personal counselor values are not a ground for referral when working with sexual minority or other protected class clients and that counselor education programs are obligated to train counselors to be competent in navigating these ethical practice areas. The most recent

addition of the ACA (2014) code of ethics clearly stated counselors may not make referrals solely based upon their personal "values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors" (A.11.b) but may only refer on grounds of professional competence (A.11.a).

To assist counselors in addressing these issues, the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC) and the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC), both divisions of the ACA, developed specific competencies for counselors working with spirituality as well as sexual orientation issues in clinical practice. The ASERVIC (2009) competencies highlighted six areas counselors must be competent in when working with spiritual issues: global culture and the client's worldview, counselor self-awareness of spirituality/religion, human and spiritual development, communication methods, assessment, and diagnosis and treatment. ALGBTIC (2009, 2012) has two competency statements addressing issues in clinical practice, one specifically developed to work with transgender clients. Both statements highlight the requirement for counselors to be competent in addressing the needs of LGBQQ clients pertaining to the areas of human growth and development, social and cultural foundations, helping relationships and group work, professional identity and ethical practice, career and lifestyle development, assessment, and research/program evaluation (ALGBTIC, 2009, 2012). These guidelines provide specific credence to the arguments of Kaplan (2014) and Whitman and Bidell (2014) that professional counselors must be prepared to assist all clients with their spirituality and sexual orientation needs.

Benefits of Identity Development

Research over the last 25 years has shown that having a positive sexual

orientation identity can lead to better psychological health for individuals (Golub, Rendina, & Gameral, 2012; Leserman, DiSantostefano, Perkins, & Evans, 1994; King & Smith, 2004; Miranda & Storms, 1989; Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2011). For example, in a two-phase correlational study (n= 100, n= 131) Miranda and Storms (1989) demonstrated that positive gay and lesbian sexual orientation correlated with improved psychological adjustment. Additionally, they found that positive sexual orientation was related to the coping skills of self-labeling and self-disclosure for the participants: meaning being more open to self and others about sexual orientation correlated with individuals having higher levels of psychological adjustment (Miranda & Storms, 1989). More recent research found similar connections between positive psychological health and adjustment with stronger and more open sexual orientation expression (Golub, Rendina, & Gameral, 2012; Leserman, DiSantostefano, Perkins, & Evans, 1994; King & Smith, 2004; Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2011).

Similar to sexual orientation, there is a connection between positive spiritual identity and improved psychological health in the literature for individuals (Faull & Hills, 2006; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2010; Nichols & Hunt, 2011). In particular, research has supported these results for young adults (Byrd & McKinney, 2012; Womble, Labbe, & Cochran, 2013). Womble et al. (2013) conducted a quantitative survey of 83 college students from two large public universities in the southern United States. These authors concluded that spirituality was a primary factor contributing to positive health resilience: students who identified themselves as spiritual had improved benefits in psychological and physical health and improved treatment outcomes when addressing problems in either health category (Womble et al., 2013). Similarly, Byrd and McKinney

(2012) found in a quantitative study at a large urban university (n= 2,203) strong spiritual identity was among a number of factors (e.g., coping abilities, confidence in communication skills, and academic self-confidence) contributing to improved psychological health.

Special Considerations for College and LGBQQ Students

Due to unique needs, college students, and specifically LGBQQ college students, require special developmental considerations (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Blau & Snell, 2013; Jenney, 2012; Scott, Belke, & Barfield, 2011; Stevens, 2004; Taliaferro, Rienzo, Pigg, Miller, & Dodd, 2009; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012). Among other concerns, college students face specific developmental challenges regarding identity formation, career decisions, and psychological health, as well as challenges to exploring their needs for inter/independence, meaning and purpose in life, and relationship dynamics including emotional regulation (Jenney, 2012; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012). Blau and Snell (2013) indicated that due to these and other unique considerations less than 50% of college students will graduate within five years of beginning their higher education. However, by making improvements in campus climate, such as providing more targeted support for young adult developmental needs, colleges can increase their graduation and retention rates (Blau & Snell, 2013).

Beyond their unique developmental needs as college students, LGBQQ individuals on campus have additional special considerations that need to be recognized by professionals (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Scott et al., 2011; Stevens, 2004). For example, LGBQQ college students must navigate multiple identity dimensions including racial, ethnic, gender, social class, religious, and sexual orientation at the same time as facing

the typical challenges of college life (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Stevens, 2004). Attempting to navigate multiple identity dimensions during a time of transition from adolescence to young adulthood presents additional strain and stressors on sexual minority college students deserving special attention (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Stevens, 2004). For example, LGBQQ students present challenges many colleges overlook, such as in connection to their unique needs for professional and career development and assistance with discrimination on many fronts (Scott et al., 2011). College students expect to receive support from the campus environment to negotiate their special developmental concerns, regardless of their sexual orientation (Blau & Snell, 2013; Jenney, 2012; Stevens, 2004).

Rationale for the Study

Due to their routine omission and marginalization from literature surrounding spiritual development, there is a need to include more voices of LGBQQ students within the literature pertaining to spiritual development during college (Lindholm, 2007; Robertson, 2010). Many researchers and professionals exploring the holistic health of college students have recognized that spiritual development is a subject deserving special attention and promotion on college campuses (Dennis et al., 2004; Holmes et al., 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007). From a social justice perspective, there is still a need in American culture to advocate for LGBQQ equality on all issues, including college student spiritual development. As few studies have moved beyond exploring the influence of coming out on spiritual development, this study aims toward the inclusion of a wide range of LGBQQ identities and experiences. This dissertation will explore potential factors for LGBQQ former college students, related to their sexual orientation, which may influence their spiritual development. This study may also identify additional factors

beyond sexual orientation that may influence spiritual development for sexual minority college students. Additionally, by focusing on this marginalized population, this study intends to broaden the number of LGBQQ college student voices on the topic of spiritual development and to develop a potential framework of factors that may promote the integration of spiritual development and sexual orientation for this population. This study will also include guidelines for college and counseling professionals working with LGBQQ students on spiritual development.

Research Questions

As this is an exploratory sequential mixed methods study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) there are two sets of research questions, one for each phase of the study. Two research questions form the basis of the qualitative phase:

1. How, if at all, does having an LGBQQ sexual orientation influence college students' spiritual development?
2. What factors beyond sexual orientation, if any, influence LGBQQ college students' spiritual development during their time in college?

In addition, the quantitative phase of this study will address the following research questions:

3. What is the content validity evidence of the instrument for a sample of current and former college students who identify as LGBQQ?

4a. What are the initial factors associated with an instrument to measure the integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development for current and former college students as indicated by exploratory factor analysis?

4b. What is the internal consistency of the instrument for a sample of current and

former college students who identify as LGBQQ?

4c. What is the criterion-related validity of the instrument as evidence by instrument total score and high integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development?

Definition of Terms

College Student is any student who is or was in attendance at a two or four-year institution of higher learning between the ages of 18 and 22 or graduate students between the ages of 23 and 25. Non-traditional college students are those individuals in school beyond the traditional ages listed above. College drop outs are students who were enrolled in college but left prior to completion (Howe & Strauss, 2005).

Sexual Orientation is the romantic or sexual attraction an individual has to the opposite sex, same sex, or both sexes. These orientations frequently go by the terms *homosexual* (i.e., lesbian or gay), *heterosexual* (i.e., straight), or *bisexual*. Also included under sexual orientation are asexual individuals (i.e., no sexual attraction) and individuals who identify as questioning their sexual orientation (ALGBTIC, 2012; Love et al., 2005).

Sexual Identity is a person's sexual self-conception, which includes their sexual orientation and sexual behaviors (i.e. the sexual acts someone performs). Sexual identity also includes an individual's sexual self-expression which is the degree to which they publicly and socially identify as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or questioning individual (Rosario et al., 2011).

Religious Identity is a personal affiliation or institutional self-identification with a particular religion or religious group/denomination, such as Christian, Muslim, Mormon, Lutheran, or any other religious or faith group (Bryant & Craft, 2010).

Spiritual Identity is a person's sense of self, personal definition, and experience as a spiritual being (Love et al., 2005).

Spirituality is a person's efforts to find meaning, purpose, genuineness, and self-transcendence (Love et al., 2005). Spirituality also involves self-awareness and personal exploration, usually involves connection to others, and may or may not incorporate a sense of a higher power, God, or larger force beyond the individual (Love et al., 2005).

Spiritual and/or Religious Development is the interest and activity level a participant has in faith, belief, religion, or spirituality as defined by an interest in the meaning and purpose of one's life and the exploration of shared experiences within a community interested in spiritual matters or in the personal exploration of spirituality; it can be viewed as a developmental process (Love et al., 2005).

Spiritual and/or Religious Practices include activities individuals do as part of their spiritual or religious expression such as prayer, attendance at a church or mosque, fasting, meditation, scriptural reading and many other activities (Bryant & Astin, 2008).

Spiritual Struggle is the process that may lead individuals to doubt, abandon, or alter their spirituality in a substantive way due to adverse experiences, knowledge, or challenges (Bryant, 2011; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Fisler et al., 2009; Small & Bowman, 2011).

Spiritual Bypass is a term potentially connected to spiritual struggle (Cashwell, 2014). Spiritual bypass occurs when individuals attempt to heal psychological problems by only working at the spiritual level, thus foregoing addressing the concern at other levels (e.g. emotional or interpersonal). Cashwell (2014) indicated spiritual bypass is a common issue for individuals exploring a spiritual path, however research reviewed in

this dissertation did not identify the phenomenon. It has been included here as indication the concept may be a factor for some LGBQQ individuals connected to the intersection of sexual orientation and spirituality.

Spiritual Competence is a professional's utilization of their beliefs, knowledge, and ability to ethically address and incorporate religion and spirituality into clinical work with interested clients; spiritual competence is related to the ASERVIC (2009) spiritual and religious competencies in counseling.

Sexual Orientation and/or Identity Competence is a professional's utilization of their beliefs, knowledge, and ability to ethically address and incorporate sexual orientation and/or sexual identity issues into clinical work with interested clients; sexual orientation and/or identity competence is related to the ALGBTIC (2012) competencies for counseling lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, intersex, and ally individuals.

The terms *spirituality*, *spiritual identity*, *spiritual and/or religious development*, and *religious identity* are related concepts used to describe similar phenomena throughout this study and will be used interchangeably, however preference will be given to the terms spirituality and spiritual development. Additionally, the terms *sexual orientation* and *sexual identity* are related terms, however sexual orientation will be given preference.

Study Delimitations

Delimitations for the qualitative phase of this study involved a participant sample of LGBQQ adult former college students. Phenomenology, the research tradition of this study, requires that reflective distance be present within the sample, adding a retrospective element to the study (Van Manen, 1990). Due to this requirement, students who were currently enrolled in two or four-year higher educational institutions were not

interviewed in this phase. The topic was also delimited specifically to the college experience and did not examine students prior to college or examine adult LGBQQ individuals who did not attend college. This study specifically looked for typical cases; however, the use of this delimited sample may limit transferability and generalizability of the findings. The sample included individuals who attended, completed, or were currently enrolled in graduate education programs. The usage of technology (i.e., Skype) permitted students residing in wider geographical areas to participate in phase one.

The quantitative instrument developed in phase two of this study was delimited to current or former LGBQQ or heterosexual college students to explore the results within a larger population. This phase was also delimited specifically to the college experience and did not examine students prior to college or examine adult LGBQQ individuals who did not attend college Participant selection and recruitment for the instrument may also lead to unknown issues, such as lack of representation, bias, or other errors in sampling. As this study was interested in the typical case, participant recruitment was through listservs, organizations, and associations that were directly linked to college students, alumni associations, LGBQQ interest groups, and related organizations. Expert reviewers for the quantitative phase were delimited to doctoral-level counselor educators, experienced with LGBQQ issues, and/or experienced in instrument design, to ensure thorough content validity of the instrument prior to data collection.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will first briefly explore relevant literature about spiritual development in adults related to counseling. It will then explore in more detail spirituality within college students and the LGBQQ population, highlighting inclusive studies. It will conclude by discussing several important models of sexual orientation development and spiritual/religious development, which may inform future research for an integrative framework of spiritual development and sexual orientation, and highlight important gaps in the research which inform the need for this study.

Spiritual Development of Adults

According to a recent national Gallup Poll (2013), 56% of American adults (n= 2,566) indicated that spirituality was "very important" to their lives. Within this same poll, 76% of adults indicated that religion is losing influence within the United States, yet 59% said they were members of a church or synagogue and 39% said they attended a religious service in the last seven days before the survey. However, the average percentage of U.S. adults who have attended religious services in the past week has steadily remained around 40%, plus or minus two to three deviation percentage points, since 1970; this compares to a 39% weekly attendance rate in 1939, demonstrating only a 1% decline in the rate of weekly religious service attendance over the previous 30 years (Gallup, 2013). Despite public perception that religion is losing its national influence, religion and spirituality has been a consistent presence for significant numbers of adults in America over the past seven decades (Gallup, 2013).

Perhaps connected to the continued presence of spirituality in American life, the

spiritual dimension in counseling has gained increased prominence within traditional clinical milieus including individual, group, and school counseling settings as well as within college counseling centers (Daniels & Fitzpatrick, 2013; Post, Cornish, Wade, & Tucker, 2013; Sink & Devlin, 2011). Researchers have identified spirituality as a primary area deserving specific focus within counseling in general (Daniels & Fitzpatrick, 2013; Powers, 2005; Young et al., 2007). Specifically, spirituality has been building within counseling literature as a topic of study and as an expected focus within counseling sessions by many adult clients (Morrison, Clutter, Pritchett, & Demmitt, 2009; Briggs & Dixon, 2013; Damianakis & Marizali, Dyer & Hagedorn, 2013; Nichols & Hunt, 2011; Pesut, Clark, Maxwell, & Michalak, 2011; Stanley et al., 2011). For example, in a quantitative study, Morrison et al. (2009) surveyed 34 counselors and 73 adult clients, as well as conducted a thorough historical literature review, to conclude counselors as well as many clients identify spirituality as an important component of counseling, especially if the counseling is provided within a religious counseling context (e.g., Christian counseling).

Other recent literature has highlighted the need for counseling to incorporate spirituality across multiple adult populations including the chronically ill, female clients, bereaved clients, African Americans, individuals diagnosed with bipolar disorder, and individuals with anxiety and depression (Boyd-Franklin, 2010; Briggs & Dixon, 2013; Damianakis & Marziali 2012, Dyer & Hagedorn, 2013; Nichols & Hunt, 2011; Pesut et al., 2011; Stanley et al., 2011). In this regard, the counseling field is following research which has been conducted on specialized populations of adults interested in spirituality within fields like public health (Holt, Clark, Debnam, & Roth, 2014) and medicine

(Hultman et al., 2014).

The older adult population (individuals aged 55 years or older) has been especially highlighted as a population with strong interest in spirituality (Damianakis & Marziali 2012; Stanley et al., 2011). In a qualitative study of 24 older adults, Damianakis and Marziali (2012) explored spirituality as a component of grief counseling. In their study, participants utilized spirituality to cope with the void created by loss as well as the changes in self-identity, the need to create new meaning in life, and the need to re-examine their spiritual beliefs connected to spousal loss, among other factors. These clients identified the roles spirituality had in helping them cope with loss, indicating counselors should utilize more spiritual resources within this population. In a related quantitative study of older adults dealing with anxiety and depression (n= 66), Stanley et al. (2011) found that the majority of clients surveyed believed religion and/or spirituality should be included in counseling. Accordingly, the individuals in this study who noted counseling should include spirituality also reported stronger faith, higher levels of collaborative problem solving styles, and positive religious-based problem management (Stanley et al., 2011). Clearly, certain populations of adults benefit from inclusion of spiritual components in counseling.

The spiritual development of LGBQQ adults has also grown as a topic of importance in counseling literature. Scholars are including the voices of LGBQQ people on the topic of sexual orientation and spiritual development in their work (Fallon et al. 2013; Kocet et al., 2011; Rodriguez & Follins, 2012). In a case study and literature review on lesbian, gay, and bisexual concerns in counseling (n= 1), Kocet et al. (2011) discussed the high value of including spiritual development in counseling sessions with LGBQQ

adult clients. These authors outlined a framework for counselors working with sexual minority adults to incorporate spiritual development into sessions. This framework included understanding the significance of religion and spirituality on identity development, examining unresolved feelings about religion and spirituality, integrating clients' sexual orientation and spiritual identities, and connecting clients with community resources to promote positive self-identity.

In a related literature review of counseling literature exploring spirituality, Fallon et al. (2013) identified themes counselors should utilize to work with adult lesbian and gay clients interested in spiritual development. Emphasizing parallel process within counseling sessions, these themes included exploration of values conflicts in the clients and counselors, exploration of coping strategies for clients and counselors, and integrating personal, religious/spiritual, and professional values into the sessions to assist navigation of spiritual development for lesbian and gay clients.

Missing from the scholarship reviewed here are college students as a subset of the adult population (Coleman, 2003; Fallon et al. 2013; Kocet et al., 2011; Rodriguez & Follins, 2012). For example, Rodriquez and Follins (2012) implied college might present sexual minority individuals with difficult developmental circumstances needing closer attention but did not study this group further. Additionally, it is essential to examine LGBQQ spirituality from the perspective of college students, as lifespan development conceptual (Torres, Jones, & Renn, 2009) and research (Moran, 2009; Ritchie et al., 2013) scholarship highlights this age as needing special attention.

Spiritual Development in College Students

Recent conceptual papers (Holmes et al., 2004; Lindholm, 2007) and research

studies (Astin et al., 2003; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis et al., 2004; Fisler et al., 2009; Hartley, 2004; Robertson, 2010; Rockenbach et al. 2012) have identified spirituality among college students as a topic deserving special attention, particularly as an essential component of development that college professionals should promote in programming, education, and personal exploration for students. Therefore, spiritual development may be a rich source of personal growth important to tap for clients, especially for college students who may be facing challenging developmental issues while navigating identity, career, and related life choices during their college experience (Jenney, 2012; Taliaferro et al., 2009; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008). Spiritual development for college students may be different from other populations due to unique factors of personality and identity formation, pressures connected to the campus environment, and related challenges arising from internal and external forces manifesting in the lives of students (Fisler et al., 2009; Moran, 2009; Ritchie et al., 2013; Torres et al., 2009).

Lindholm (2007) conducted a literature review of several spirituality studies, concluding that not only do students overwhelmingly want their college experience to include spirituality but many faculty also desire spirituality, for themselves and students, to be recognized as a meaningful campus pursuit. Lindholm (2007) argued that colleges should develop resources for spiritual development in the same manner as personal and career development services. Similarly, quantitative and qualitative researchers have come to related conclusions about incorporating spiritual development for college students and fostering growth through spiritual advising, counseling, and programming (e.g., Astin et al., 2003; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis et al., 2004; Hartley, 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007; Rockenbach et al., 2012). In a large, national

quantitative survey of 3,680 college students, Astin et al. (2003) found over half of the respondents indicated that spirituality was important to them, wanting more integration into their lives, although participation in some religious practices (e.g., church attendance) declined for the sample. Thus, religion and spirituality are intertwined if separate aspects relevant to healthy college student development (Hartely, 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007) and deserve targeted focus by professionals working with college student populations.

Differences do exist within college students concerning spiritual development. Gender is a factor which can influence spiritual development on campus (Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis et al., 2004; Mullikin, 2006; Soet & Martin, 2007). In a quantitative study of 524 American college students, Dennis et al. (2004) concluded that male students often need additional support to explore spirituality as a means to improving holistic health than do females. Mullikin's (2006) quantitative study (n= 100) of two Midwestern colleges highlighted how families of origin frequently socialized females to spirituality and religion more than males and how females embraced religion and spirituality into their lives with more ease and utility than did males, which resulted in female college students having a more fully developed sense of spirituality prior to and during college. Bryant and Astin (2008) contrarily found higher rates of spiritual conflict in female students. According to their national survey (n= 3,680), females with multiple non-dominant identities may be at even higher risk for spiritual conflict than their male counterparts. In response to a literature review indicating men and women experience spiritual development differently, Soet and Martin (2007) developed a case study at a large, Midwestern public university of two women's spiritual growth groups (n= 8; n=

6). The women in these campus groups reported happiness at having a dedicated women only space to explore spiritual development but also recommended similar space be given for men only groups as well as mixed gender groups to dialogue between the sexes about spiritual experiences (Soet & Martin, 2007). Collectively, these researchers are aware of how gender affects spiritual development and how ethnicity and non-dominant cultural markers (such as a religion) also shape spirituality; however, none emphasize the potentially unique influence that sexual orientation and/or identity may have on spiritual development for college students.

Some studies concerning spirituality in college students deal with the concept of spiritual struggle, defined as the process that may lead students to doubt, abandon, or alter their spirituality in a substantive way due to adverse experiences, knowledge, or challenges (Bryant, 2011; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Fisler et al., 2009; Small & Bowman, 2011). Spiritual struggle is a potential concern for college counseling professionals due to negative consequences it may have on students' behavioral health (Faigin, Pergament, &Abu-Riaya, 2014). For some college students, spiritual struggle has been linked to serious addictions, indicating this concept may have significant clinical implications within a campus setting (Faigin et al., 2014). In a longitudinal quantitative study of college freshman at a mid-Western university (N= 90), Faigin et al. (2014) examined the possible linkage between spiritual struggle and addictive behaviors. This study found that individuals scoring higher on a spiritual struggle scale were more likely to engage in 11 different addictions domains (e.g., alcohol, illegal and prescription drugs, sex, shopping, caffeine, gambling, tobacco, and work). This study indicated that students may turn to negative coping strategies, such as addictions, during college to manage emotional

distress and the internal void connected to their spiritual struggle experiences (Faigin et al., 2014). This study highlighted spiritual struggle as a possible predictor for addictive behaviors in some college students, indicating this concept deserves attention for college counselors and student affairs professionals (Faigin et al., 2014).

Examining a different aspect of spiritual struggle, Bryant and Astin (2008) conducted a national quantitative survey exploring over 3,400 college students' perceptions of spiritual struggle. Their findings indicated that students from marginalized populations, such as ethnic minorities or non-dominant religions, as well as students who have experienced social maltreatment in life (e.g., discrimination), are at a higher risk for experiencing spiritual struggles during college than students from dominant populations or students who experience generally fair treatment. Furthermore, they linked spiritual struggle with higher rates of psychological and physical distress. Bryant and Astin (2008) did not attend to LGBQQ students as a marginalized population in their research on spiritual struggle even though the study emphasized individuals from nondominant groups.

Bryant (2011) and Small and Bowman (2011) used the same data set to conduct nationwide longitudinal quantitative studies of 14,527 students across 136 colleges exploring spiritual struggle, religious commitment, skepticism in college students, and how ecumenical worldview impacts student spirituality. Both studies recognized the differences between students from majority and minority religions in the United States. These studies, interested in promotion of spiritual development diversity and growth for college students, concluded factors such as campus climate (e.g., ecumenical worldview), exposure to religious diversity, support from faculty, and having social networks

connected to one's faith contribute to levels of student skepticism, spiritual struggle, and religious commitment. Although these studies extended the conversation on spirituality beyond dominant religions and included non-religious students, they did not explore gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or other cultural characteristics as potential influences.

In a qualitative study using inductive analysis (n= 16), Fisler et al. (2009) examined spiritual struggle finding that factors such as academic problems, changes in spiritual values, external challenges (caused by people or events around them), and internal processes (introspection or reading certain books) strongly influenced how students coped with spiritual struggles. Fisler et al. (2009) identified four methods students in their sample used to cope with spiritual struggle: (a) recommitting to their faith; (b) slightly altering their religious or spiritual values; (c) merging or blending different spiritual beliefs/practices, and; (d) abandoning their faith. Yet, Fisler at al. (2009) did not address sexual orientation as a potential factor contributing to spiritual struggle. Several students in this study moved through their spiritual struggles to develop a new and more beneficial, according to the authors, integrated view of spirituality. Students in this study who developed an integrated view of spirituality, as opposed to abandoning their faith, positively reconciled challenging ideas faced in college with their pre-college value system to form a new (i.e., integrated) personal concept of spirituality.

The spiritual struggle of LGBQQ students has also been examined within some studies using qualitative designs (LePeau, 2007; Love et al., 2005; Rockenbach et al., 2012). After researching literature on the potential for spiritual struggle connected to spirituality and sexual orientation, LePeau (2007) offered an example of the type of

inclusive programming colleges could create for LGBQQ students. In a case study, the author discussed her experiences in developing and running a brief college course on the interaction of sexual orientation, religion, and spirituality. She conducted the course over two semesters, and a variety of students (from heterosexual to LGBQQ and with diverse opinions on spirituality) attended the course. LePeau (2007) offered information and advice for professionals interested in providing similar programming and provided practical advice, such as the importance of leader reflexivity, exploring privileges, and validation of all students' feelings on this topic; however, the study is a description of one program at one college.

Rockenbach et al. (2012) explored how LGBQQ identity is a potential factor of spiritual struggle in college students. Additionally, this study examined spiritual struggles from other diversity categories, including non-dominant religions and ethnicity. Results of this study identified themes of contrast, or dualities, within the concept of spiritual struggle between participants' possible selves, between participants and others, and within participants' revelations about the meaning life and reality. This phenomenology of 10 students only looked at students experiencing spiritual struggles leaving out any LGBQQ students whose spiritual development is conflict neutral.

There is an assumption in the research that spiritual struggle is inevitable for sexual minorities even in studies which are inclusive to a wide range of sexual identities. For example, Love et al. (2005) interviewed 12 lesbian and gay students from two public universities dealing with spiritual development. This constructivist interpretivist study identified diverse and complex definitions of spirituality for the participants falling within categories of "reconciliation, nonreconciliation, and undeveloped spiritual

identity" (p.199). Reconciliation or nonreconciliation described how LGBQQ students had integrated their sexual orientation into their spiritual development. Assumed within these categories of integration were levels of personal conflict between spirituality and sexual orientation. Although this study provided insight into integration, assuming conflict occurs during this process seems limiting and does not recognize the potential for a variety of integration experiences, potentially marginalizing LGBQQ students who experience no conflict during integration or experience integration on a spectrum. Love et al. (2005) extended research about LGBQQ college student spirituality but it is necessary to view this topic from a phenomenological perspective to capture the fullest range of experiences and to broaden the scope of research on LGBQQ spiritual development in college students even further. Despite this need, campus conversations concerning spiritual development often overlook LGBQQ students (Lindholm, 2007; Robertson, 2010).

Researchers have identified spiritual development as a significant contributor to the holistic health of college students (Holmes et al., 2004) and for LGBQQ adults (Kocet et al., 2011; Rodriguez & Follins, 2012); however, few studies have emphasized the need for spiritual development for LGBQQ college students, specifically. In fact, most studies on this topic examine heterosexual students or do not identify sexual orientation as a factor deserving special attention (Dennis et al., 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007). Although some research concerning spirituality (i.e., spiritual struggle) includes sexual orientation factors, there is a strong need to broaden the number of voices of LGBQQ college students on the topic of spiritual development and sexual orientation.

Spirituality in LGBQQ Populations

Sexual orientation and spiritual development studies that do emphasize college students frequently link spirituality with the coming out process (Gold, 2011; Gold & Stewart, 2011; Rhoads, 1997a). In an early phenomenological study on gay and bisexual college males (n= 40), Rhoads (1997a) identified three distinct challenges participants faced: visibility on campus, coming out, and harassment and discrimination. Although Rhoads' study represented an important historical attempt to examine spirituality and sexual orientation, the author only examined men and did not include transgender individuals or other sexual orientation identities.

Further, Gold (2011) and Gold and Stewart (2011) directly linked the spirituality of LGBQQ college students to the coming out process. Discussing the same study, Gold (2011) and Gold and Stewart (2011) were exclusively interested in how college students utilized spirituality during their coming out process. They surveyed 47 participants seeking their qualitative responses to a web survey exploring issues connected specifically to sexual orientation, coming out, and spiritual development. All 47 participants in this study indicated they were open about their sexual orientation to people in their lives, although to whom and to what degree varied.

Although these studies provided strong support for colleges assisting LGBQQ students to develop as spiritual individuals, connecting spiritual development exclusively to coming out is limiting. Coming out may not be a formative process for all LGBQQ students exploring spiritual development, as these studies imply, or some students may have come out prior to attending college. Those students experiencing their sexual orientation outside of the coming out process or who are questioning and do not choose

to publically identify an identity must be included in research on spiritual development.

Some studies do embrace more inclusive approaches to the study of spirituality in college students by taking a broader look at LGBQQ identity (Bryant & Craft, 2010; Heerman, Wiggins, & Rutter, 2007; LePeau, 2007; Love et al., 2005; Rockenbach et al., 2012; Stratton, Dean, Yarhouse, & Lastoria, 2013). For example, Heerman et al. (2007) provided a case study of a 22 year-old gay male engaged in outpatient counseling, recently a college graduate, who was attempting to integrate his sexuality with his spirituality. In this study, the authors discussed the need for campus chaplains and pastoral counselors to provide spiritual development resources to sexual minorities in ways that promote a healthy resolution of the two identities. However, even in this inclusive study, the participant's college student status was not a focus of analysis. No conclusions are possible from this study for how the participant's identity interacted, if at all, with his spiritual exploration.

Bryant and Craft (2010) and Stratton et al. (2013) examined a student population mostly overlooked in college spirituality studies: sexual minority students at religious institutions. Bryant and Craft (2010) demonstrated in a qualitative case study of one college how minority-identifying students cannot separate spirituality from their identity, including students who identify as sexual minorities. For students in this study (n= 55), their sexual orientation interconnected with their spiritual expression. This study, although limited to the Lutheran campus examined, showed how spirituality is a complex system interconnected with all aspects of identity, including ethnic identity, international status, and sexual orientation. The results of this study are difficult to transfer beyond its participants, but showed promise for creating inclusive spirituality studies on other

campuses.

Stratton et al. (2013) conducted a national quantitative study (n= 247) looking at LGBQQ students at Protestant Christian colleges across the United States and found little difference in how these students experienced or conceptualized spiritual identity from their heterosexual counterparts. Stratton et al. (2013) concluded that Christian college students displayed a wide diversity of spiritual identity, expression, beliefs, and experiences regardless of their sexual orientation. However, only examining students with dominant religious affiliations limited the study. Stratton et al. (2013) offered impetus for Christian colleges to provide spiritual support for sexual minority students but offered little guidance to colleges with diverse student spiritual affiliations.

Models of Sexual Orientation Development

As the present study concerns itself with the integration of spiritual development and sexual orientation, developmental models of identity (sexual and spiritual) may serve as essential guides or points of disagreement. Most prominent sexual orientation/identity development models (i.e., Cass, 1984; Coleman, 1982; McCarn & Fassinger, 1996; Rhoads, 1997b; Savin-Williams, 1998) are not recent or are limited in other ways.

Perhaps the most influential model of sexual orientation development in adults (Zubernis, Snyder, & McCoy, 2011) is the Cass (1984) model. Cass examined homosexual orientation formation and verified her model with a quantitative survey (n= 178). Cass identified six stages of identity formation (a) identity confusion; (b) identity comparison; (c) identity tolerance; (d) identity acceptance; (e) identity pride; and (f) identity synthesis. Although the stages in the Cass model appeared inclusive of a variety of identity experiences, they implied a linear evolution for development and did not

account for individuals between two stages (a limitation Cass acknowledged). Additionally, the study sample was restricted to gay men and women, thus collapsing the range of LGBQQ orientation identification presently accepted in the literature.

A second prominent model is the conceptual Coleman (1982) model, important for its early focus on the coming out process (McCarn & Fassinger, 1996). Coleman conceptualized a five-stage process of coming out: pre-coming out, coming out, exploration, first relationships, and integration. Coleman's model, like the Cass (1984) model, offered a linear progression to identity development and did not incorporate the range of orientations for individuals who are identify as LGBQQ and overlooked individuals either who do not come out or who integrated their sexual orientation into their identity prior to developing relationships. Although Cass attempted to verify her model quantitatively, the Coleman model based its stages on the author's theoretical interpretations.

The McCarn and Fassinger (1996) model is also cited frequently by other theorists (Eliason, 2009; Zubernis et al., 2011) as an influential model. These authors used three case studies to explain their stage-based model of sexual orientation development. McCarn and Fassinger identified sexual orientation development through stages of (a) awareness (nonawareness); (b) exploration; (c) deepening/commitment; and (d) internalization/synthesis. This model combined elements from the Cass (1984) and Coleman (1982) models, such as exploration and synthesis. Like the earlier models, this model assumed linear progression through the stages for individuals and did not incorporate additional influences on sexual orientation development such as spirituality. The case study approach of this model further limited this model from transferability

beyond the participants.

Savin-Williams (1998) and Rhoads (1997b) offered different views of sexual orientation development than those already mentioned. These two "models" were not stage dependent nor did they emphasize a progression to acceptance or synthesis. The coming out process was the focus of the Savin-Williams (1998) model, examining what identity factors influence lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, including college students, when coming out to their parents. By examining in a content analysis the empirical research on coming out available in 1998, this author stated he could not easily make conclusions about family disclosure during the coming out process, arguing for a more fluid and organic view than presented in previous models. Additionally, Savin-Williams (1998) found that youth are more likely to come out to friends than to family members first and for many youth this process occurred at college. His study provided an early argument to examine sexual orientation in college students and faulted other research for limiting diversity by not including ethnicity, religious affiliation, or gender as factors potentially influencing coming out or sexual orientation.

Rhoads (1997b) went a step further than Savin-Williams (1998) by offering an "anti-model" for bisexual and gay male sexual orientation development in college students. In a qualitative study of 40 students, Rhoads disagreed with previous literature on this topic that presented a homogenous view of LGBQQ identity and cautioned against following any model too rigidly. Rhoads, like Savin-Williams, believed sexual orientation development was an organic, individual process, which shifted based on differences in racial and ethnic identity, bisexuality, and gay politics. Rhoads did not delineate stages in his model but discussed comparable "webs of connection" versus

"points of tension" for his participants. Thus, gay and bisexual males shared sexual orientation elements where the webs connected and differed on how they addressed the tension points, such as beliefs about bisexuality. Although this study focused on college students, it did not include women in its sample or examine transgender or questioning students, limiting its results.

Newer models of sexual orientation development often grow from one or more of the historical models or use them as points of disagreement (see Bilodeau & Renn, 2005; Eliason, 2009; King & Biro, 2006; Zubernis, et al., 2011). The newer models also share the comprehensive and organic movement of identity present in the Rhoads (1997b) and Savin-Williams (1998) models and strive to accept a wider range of sexual identities and experiences.

In a conceptual article, Zubernis et al. (2011) combined the Cass (1984) model of sexual orientation development with Chickering's (Chickering & Reisser, 2003) model of college student development into a new model. To provide a more comprehensive approach to LGBQQ identity in college students, this model utilized Chickering's (Chickering & Reisser, 2003) developmental vectors to view Cass's stage development including the following (a) developing competence; (b) managing emotions; (c) moving through autonomy to interdependence; (d) developing mature interpersonal relationships; (e) establishing identity; (f) developing purpose; and (g) developing integrity. According to the authors, combining the Chickering and Cass models could provide student affairs professionals with more thorough recommendations tailored to the stage of development, from the Cass model in which LGBQQ students located themselves, and support campus promotion of positive self-development for sexual minorities.

Similar to the Savin-Williams (1998) and Rhoads (1997b) models, in a conceptual article Eliason (2009) took a view of sexual orientation that combined many forces, influences, and characteristics, including spirituality. Rather than stages, this author proposed a four-quadrant model for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) identity development that included (a) interior (individual); (b) interior (collective); (c) exterior (individual) and; (d) exterior (collective) quadrants. Within each of these quadrants, she placed LGBT affirming or non-affirming characteristics. Examples of affirming characteristics in the interior (individual) quadrant included stage models of development and spiritual development/experiences. Eliason's model proposed a comprehensive view of identity development and integration for LGBT individuals that is not dependent on progression to a particular level and provided a wide range of sexual orientation expression, but not the full range accepted in current literature.

Transformative learning, the process that occurs when individuals shift their frame of reference concerning part of their personality, was the focus of the conceptual King and Biro (2006) sexual orientation development model. This model intended to capture fluid movements of identity, rather than placing LGBQQ individuals within specific categories of development. King and Biro recognized cyclical process stages (which include question, risk, strategy, act, and accept new perspective) that fit within several framing perspectives or identity themes. The framing perspectives include sexual orientation exists, coming out to yourself, coming out to others, and valuing and embracing different journeys. These frames represented various ways LGBQQ individuals could understand their sexual orientation throughout their development and the process stages indicated development may cycle depending on circumstances or life

events.

Although not presenting a specific model, Bilodeau and Renn (2005) examined in a content analysis all existing models dealing with sexual orientation development for college students and arrived at a similar conclusion to Rhoads (1997a). Bilodeau and Renn stated that professionals should not assume the end of a stage model is superior to other steps on the model or that reaching such an end is desirable for many individuals. This author encouraged professionals to thoroughly research stage models of sexual orientation development before applying them to students or programming as the models may be limited and overlook sexual orientation aspects for some students.

Table 1
Summary of Sexual Identity Models

Model	Date	Type	Themes
Coleman	1982	Stages (5)	Linear Progression; Coming Out
Cass	1984	Stages (6)	Linear Progression; No Account for Between Stage Experiences
McCarn & Fassinger	1996	Stages (4)	Linear Progression; No Account for Other Factors
Rhoads	1997a, b	Non-Stage	Anti-Model; Fluid Identity; Shared Identity Elements
Savin-Willams	1998	Non-Stage	Non-linear; Fluid Identity; Coming Out
Bilodeau & Renn	2005	Non-Model	Meta-Model Review; Fluid Identity; Non-hierarchical
King & Biro	2006	Stages (5)	Cyclical Progression; Fluid Identity; Framing Perspectives (4)
Eliason	2009	Quadrants (4)	Affirming/Non-Affirming; Comprehensive Identity
Zubernis et al.	2011	Vectors (7)	Combined Model; Comprehensive Identity

Table 1 includes a review of sexual orientation development models. The larger

theme of the newer models of sexual orientation development encourages LGBQQ individuals to view their identity through more organic and changing perspectives rather than the linear progression of earlier stage models. Newer models attempt to provide comprehensive views of identity development and to include a wider range of LGBQQ identity categories and caution professionals from seeing stage development as linear progress for sexual minorities. If these models are correct (that development can be fluid and developmental progression is not inevitable), than it is essential for colleges to provide adequate resources for LGBQQ students as they transition through college and the various identities available to them.

Models of Spiritual/Religious Development

As for sexual orientation models, it is important to explore models of spiritual/religious development within the context of this study to recognize the potential influence these models may have on participants in phases one and two of this study. According to Friedman et al. (2010) there are a large number of models of spiritual and religious development. To organize the plethora of models into manageable foci, these authors used three primary categories: traditional, integrative-philosophical, and scientific. To frame this discussion, I will borrow their classification system and highlight major examples under each category.

Traditional Model

Friedman et al. (2010) divided the traditional models of spiritual development into subcategories of indigenous, Western, and Eastern models following specific cultural and religious practices. For example, indigenous models may follow shamanistic beliefs unique to a tribal perspective, such as the Zulu, and be differentiated from the Western

traditions of Christianity or Eastern traditions like Hinduism (Friedman et al., 2010). Indigenous models may include spiritual practices which involve hallucinogenic substances, rituals to connect the individual to a spirit world, interpretation of dreams, coming of age ceremonies, belief in sorcery, and often include the healing of physical illness and disease (Friedman et al., 2010).

Indigenous models share some common features with the Western and Eastern models, such as fasting and chanting, meditation, or elaborate religious festivals (Friedman et al., 2010). However, Western religious models traditionally follow a more formal organization than do Eastern or indigenous models of spiritual development, as in the dominant Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Friedman et al., 2010). These Western models rely on interpretation of historic religious texts (i.e., Bible, Koran) and typically encourage practitioners to worship together in congregations (i.e., mosques or synagogues) but also include individual spiritual practices such as scriptural study or prayer.

The Eastern model of spiritual development includes religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Shintoism, amongst others (Friedman et al., 2010). Rather than emphasizing personal relationships with a deity, as in Western models, the Eastern models frequently include an impersonal relationship with one or more deities, a focus on internal personal development and self-awareness, and emphasis on energy transformation (i.e., qi, chakras). The Eastern models include religious practices like yoga, tantric meditation, and ancestor reverence. The Eastern models also include major historical texts (e.g., Bhagavad Gita, Buddhist sutras) which can be studied and meditated upon similarly to the Western models (Friedman et al., 2010).

Within these traditional models, the spiritual development of adherents is proscribed by the particular religious tenets of their faith group and varies from informal to formal and/or open to hierarchical. For example, spiritual development in Western models may be judged by proficiency in specific religious practices or individual growth whereas indigenous spiritual development may be measured more by service to the community than by personal growth (Friedman et al., 2010). It is beyond the scope of this review to explore the numerous dimensions of traditional models but it is important to recognize the influence they may have on the lives of LGBQQ college students, especially with regard to the integration of spirituality and sexual orientation for individuals from non-dominant faiths.

Integrative-Philosophical Model

The integrative-philosophical models of spiritual development moved away from a religious faith basis in favor of philosophical roots and frequently combined approaches from several theoretical perspectives (Friedman et al., 2010). Friedman et al. (2010) considered the models of Wilber (1980, 2000) and Underhill (1961) to be the most influential of the integrative-philosophical models. Underhill (1961), one of the earliest conceptual theorists to combine philosophy with spiritual development, developed a mystically-oriented five stage model that included awakening, purgation, illumination, and a period of abandonment by God which leads to the final stage of loss of self and union with the "ultimate" in a mystical hierarchy. According to Underhill (1961), few individuals moved beyond the third stage.

Wilber (1980) synthesized multiple ideas into an evolutionary model for spiritual development consisting of four phases. Wilber's phases take a historical and cultural

perspective to discuss eras of consciousness, including the primordial period where spirituality was bodily manifested, a period of myth and magic, a period defined by early developments in cognitive reasoning and language, resulting in a final, modern period of ego development permitting personal distance to evaluate the self rationally. Wilber (2000) later theorized a synthesis of Eastern and Western models into another four stage model of mystical spirituality (gross level mysticism, causal, subtle, and integral stages of development), further utilizing ideas about how ego influences spiritual development towards a union of feelings, actions, and thoughts.

Some authors identify these models under the label of transpersonal models (Wiggins-Frame, 2003). By example, Wiggins-Frame (2003) situated Washburn's (2003) model within transpersonal psychology and psychoanalytic theory. Washburn's model included three progressive stages: the pre-egoic or body ego, the egoic stage, and the transegoic stage. According to Wiggins-Frame, Washburn's model represented a merger of psychological and spiritual realities, leaving room for movement or recycling within the stages, but still represented a hierarchical model of spiritual development (a feature of most spiritual development models) implying those in lower stages are not as developed as those in higher levels.

Scientific Model

The third focus of spiritual development identified by Friedman et al. (2010) is the scientific, including the subcategories of psychological and neurobiological. According to Friedman et al., neurobiological models are presently emerging, representing an application of the tools of neurobiological analysis to the experiences of spirituality, and in the future might represent new models of spiritual development.

Wiggins-Frame (2003) identified Allport's (1950) and Fowler's (1981) psychological models as the two most prominent scientific models of spiritual development. Psychological models, some emerging from the psychology of religion like Allport's model, have significantly influenced spiritual development studies but have limitations coming from a very Western, hierarchical, and deterministic perspective (Wiggins-Frame, 2003).

In Allport's (1950) model, which many researchers have empirically studied (Friedman et al., 2010), spiritual development moved through three progressing stages: raw credulity, satisfying rationalism, and religious maturity. Allport's model progressed from childhood to adolescence to adulthood and recognized the essential components of higher cognitive functioning in moving through the stages. Raw credulity represented a naïve, authority-based viewpoint wherein children believe everything adults teach and is distinguished from a questioning or perhaps rejection of faith/traditions characteristic of the adolescent rationalism stage (Wiggins-Frame, 2003). Within the stage of religious maturity, individuals learned to evaluate their faith critically and balanced doubt with belief in non-oppressive ways (Allport, 1950; Wiggins-Frame, 2003).

Fowler's (1981) model of spiritual development incorporated the lifespan models of Piaget and Kohlberg as well as theoretical influences from Erikson and Freud (Friedman et al., 2010; Wiggins-Frame, 2003). Fowler's stages, like Allport's (1950), moved primarily from birth to late adulthood, matching a stage for most age-related developmental points, and included the stages of primal faith, intuitive-projective faith, mythic-literal faith, synthetic-conventional faith, individualistic-reflective faith, conjunctive faith, and universalizing faith. The last stage of Fowler's model, rarely

achieved, represented advanced commitment to universal values and social advocacy evidenced by religious figures like Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr. (Wiggins-Frame, 2003). Table 2 includes a summary of the spiritual/religious development models.

Table 2
Summary of Spiritual/Religious Development

Category	Model	Type	Themes
Traditional	Indigenous	Religious	Tribal; Shamanistic; Healing; Community
Traditional	Western	Religious	Abrahamic Faiths; Formal; Scriptural
Traditional	Eastern	Religious	Self-awareness; Energy Practices; Scriptural
Integrative-Philosophical	Underhill	Stages (5)	Mystical; Progressive Hierarchy
Integrative-Philosophical	Wilber (1980)	Phases (4)	Evolutionary; Rational; Progressive Hierarchy
Integrative-Philosophical	Wilber (2000)	Stages (4)	East/West Synthesis; Ego; Progressive Hierarchy
Integrative-Philosophical	Washburn	Stages (3)	Psychology; Spirituality; Ego; Progressive Hierarchy
Scientific	Allport	Stages (3)	Lifespan; Cognitive Growth; Progressive Hierarchy
Scientific	Fowler	Stages (7)	Lifespan; Psychology; Progressive Hierarchy

Each of the models of spiritual development discussed here imply a hierarchical progression from one stage to another seeing lower stages as having less value or lower levels of transcendence than the upper stages. Whereas Fowler (1981) and Allport (1950) clearly defined and rooted their psychological models in theory and research, critics (Friedman et al., 2010; Wiggins-Frame, 2003) believed they are deterministic, progressive, and hierarchical, leaving little room for developmental individuality, and overly emphasized Western religious traditions. These models of spiritual/religious development have been influential, have continued to generate empirical research (Leak,

2008; Rogers, Skidmore, Montgomery, Reidhead, & Reidhead, 2012), and may have relevance to participants' experiences in this study.

Research Gaps

This review of literature on research pertaining to spiritual development and sexual orientation has indicated several research design gaps which justify the need for this current study from a qualitative and quantitative perspective. The potential influence of LGBQQ sexual orientation on the spiritual development of college students has not been inclusively studied from several perspectives. None of the spiritual/religious identity models included sexual orientation as a potential factor on development; however newer models do permit a fluidity of identity development. Most of the studies researching spirituality and sexual orientation utilize outdated and conceptual theoretical research and do not include a full spectrum of LGBQQ sexual orientation perspectives. Additionally, prior studies researching this topic limit their findings by linking spirituality for sexual minorities exclusively to the coming out process and/or making the assumption that the influence of sexual orientation upon spiritual development inevitably leads to spiritual struggle for LGBQQ college students. Prior research is also limiting by excluding potential additional factors upon spiritual development for LGBQQ students beyond their sexual orientation, such as gender, ethnicity, or identification with a minority faith group. These assumptions and limitations place boundaries on individuals who may experience a range of spiritual experiences connected to or independent of their sexual orientation.

These gaps in the research concerning the potential influence of sexual orientation on spiritual development for college students require additional and more inclusive qualitative exploration to capture the full, rich experience of diverse individuals prior to

being explored quantitatively. To fully explore a wide spectrum of experience, including the possibility for some individuals that sexual orientation has no influence on their spiritual development, this study used a mixed methods approach to study former LGBQQ college students' experiences with spiritual development as it intersects with, if at all, their sexual orientation. It was hoped that the study will fill in gaps in research on this topic, discover factors contributing to the integration of spirituality and sexual orientation, and contribute suggestions to college counseling and student affairs professionals working with this population for the promotion of inclusive spiritual development for LGBQQ college students.

Summary

Research has demonstrated a wide range of issues affecting the development of LGBQQ college students and spirituality is one component routinely identified as a beneficial support for the personal development of college students (Astin et al., 2003; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis et al. 2004; Hartley, 2004; Lindholm, 2007; Rockenbach et al., 2012; Savin-Williams, 1998). Considering many studies exploring this topic have marginalized LGBQQ students, it is essential to broaden the voices of sexual minorities on this topic. The many models of sexual orientation and spiritual/religious development discussed in this literature review indicate the need for comprehensive, fluid views of LGBQQ development that include room for spirituality. This study may provide additional evidence for inclusive campus support for a range of spiritual and sexual orientation development needs. As much of the literature on this topic is outdated or limiting, this dissertation aimed for a wide spectrum view of experience concerning how, if at all, sexual orientation influences spiritual development for LGBQQ college students.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The spiritual development of college students has received growing interest within the literature of counseling and related fields of study over the past decade (Fisler et al., 2009; Hartley, 2004; Rockenbach, et al., 2012). Within this body of research, LGBQQ students have either been ignored (Lindholm, 2007; Robertson, 2010) or their spiritual development has been exclusively tied to their coming out experiences and/or spiritual struggle during college (Gold & Stewart, 2011; Rockenbach et al., 2012).

The intent of this two-phase, exploratory sequential mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) was to explore the influence of LGBQQ sexual orientation on the spiritual development of college students. The first step entailed a phenomenological study exploring the lived experiences of LGBQQ former college students concerning how their sexual orientation influenced, if at all, their spiritual development during college. Findings from this qualitative phase were then used to support the development of a quantitative instrument to evaluate the integrated spiritual-sexual orientation development of college students. Specifically, the second step entailed development of an instrument to explore within a larger sample results from the first stage. The combined results informed suggestions of integration factors for sexual orientation and spiritual development within LGBQQ college students and provide suggestions for college counseling and student affairs professionals working within this population.

A mixed methods research design is a method used to collect, analyze, and combine both qualitative and quantitative data into one study to explore a research

problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). A mixed methods research design can present a stronger study design by accomplishing some or all of the following: offsetting weaknesses of qualitative or quantitative designs, providing more comprehensive evidence for the study of research problems, and offering the ability to address questions either single research approach cannot answer. Additionally, a mixed methods design has the ability to offer collaboration on research projects and permits the interaction of multiple paradigms and worldviews between purely qualitative or quantitative research perspectives. A final benefit of mixed methods research designs is the ability to practically apply any methods appropriate for a study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Mixed methods research designs do have potential drawbacks including the length of time and amount of resources needed to conduct a study. Mixed methods designs also complicate research procedures and descriptions, risking confusing the readers or researchers, and challenges to implementing the research can exist such as researchers being trained in one method versus the other and not being able to accurately interpret all data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

An exploratory sequential mixed methods design was an appropriate design for this study to verify the results of a phenomenological exploration within a larger population for generalizability. The exploratory sequential mixed methods design works well for testing hypotheses and theories when instruments are not available and works well to identify unknown variables to study quantitatively. Using this design permitted the qualitative results to inform the quantitative design and final analysis combined interpretation of results from each stage (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Research Questions

As this proposed dissertation was an exploratory sequential mixed methods study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) there were two sets of research questions, one for each phase of the study. Two research questions formed the basis of the qualitative study:

1. How, if at all, does having an LGBQQ sexual orientation influence college students' spiritual development?
2. What factors beyond sexual orientation, if any, influence LGBQQ college students' spiritual development during their time in college?

In addition, the quantitative phase of this study will address the following research questions:

3. What is the content validity evidence of the instrument for a sample of current and former college students who identify as LGBQQ?

4a. What are the initial factors associated with an instrument to measure the integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development for current and former college students as indicated by exploratory factor analysis?

4b. What is the internal consistency of the instrument for a sample of current and former college students who identify as LGBQQ?

4c. What is the criterion-related validity of the instrument as evidence by instrument total score and high integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development?

Qualitative Research Phase

The first stage of this study used the research paradigm of critical humanism and the research tradition of phenomenology as key frameworks. If the conclusion that the

unique health needs and experiences, of which spirituality is a direct contributor, of the LGBQQ population in America (and young adults in particular) are not fully known (IOM, 2011) then phenomenology and critical humanism offer the best combination to address this research gap. Phenomenology, as a qualitative tradition, has roots in the lived experiences of individuals and is committed to understanding phenomena from the individuals' unique personal perspectives (Patton, 2015). Phenomenological research strives to gain a deep understanding of the meaning of everyday experience, of which spiritual development is one such experience for many LGBQQ college students (Love et al., 2005; Patton, 2015). Therefore, phenomenology makes three main assumptions (Patton, 2015). The first assumption is what people know and how they interpret the world is essential to research. The second assumption is researchers must come to direct, personal understandings of participant experiences as is possible via interviews and/or participant observations methodologies. The third assumption is a core meaning of phenomena, called the essence, exists which researchers must explore with participants.

Phenomenology involves the researcher setting aside their biases and assumptions and permitting participants, seen as co-researchers, to detail their definitive experiences of a phenomenon (Hays & Singh, 2012). The participants provide the researcher with both the essential meaning (i.e., the essence) of an experience and variations on the phenomenon under study to develop a complete picture of the phenomenon (Patton, 2015). Additionally, phenomenology requires participants to reflect on experiences they have had rather than discuss experiences they are presently having, thus phenomenological inquiry is always reflective or retrospective rather than introspective (Van Manen, 1990). By using phenomenology in this study, participants were able to

describe their experiences and explain how they experienced those experiences to fully explain the phenomenon of sexual orientation intersection with spiritual development (Patton, 2015).

Critical humanism, as a research paradigm, also emphasizes the daily, lived experiences of participants and acknowledges the embedded social and political agendas connected to research (Plummer, 2011). Plummer (2011) stated critical humanism is "...allied to symbolic interactionism, pragmatism, democratic thinking, storytelling, moral progress, redistribution, justice, and good citizenship" (p. 196). He also stated critical humanism is an approach that emphasizes human experience particularly "...the structure of experience and its daily lived nature-and that acknowledge the political and social role of all inquiry" (p.197). One of the purposes of this study was to broaden the voices of LGBQQ individuals, due to their continued marginalization in scholarship, concerning spiritual development during college and phenomenology and the critical humanism perspective worked well to achieve this inherently political and social justice-oriented goal based on the individual lived experiences of study participants. With their emphases on personal human experience, this paradigm and tradition also worked well to guide the open exploration of potentially unknown factors between the intersection of sexual orientation and spiritual development for the participants in stage one of the study (Patton, 2015; Plummer, 2011).

Role of the Researcher

The primary researcher of this study was a 39-year-old White male. At the time of the study, he was a doctoral student in a counselor education and supervision program and held a master of science degree in community counseling, a master of arts degree in

American studies, and a bachelor of arts degree in sociology. He has been a counselor for over 14 years; nine of those years of experience were post-masters. The primary researcher had graduate training in qualitative and quantitative research methods. The primary researcher was responsible for all aspects of this study including designing the research questions, locating and connecting with participants, conducting and transcribing interviews, and analyzing data.

Auditor Selection

The primary researcher utilized an auditor in the research process. Within qualitative research, a researcher may use an external auditor or a research team to examine results of the data collected and analyzed (Creswell, 2007; Hays & Singh, 2012). In this study, the auditor was a female doctoral student colleague of the primary researcher. This individual had training in qualitative and quantitative research design and content knowledge in the field of counseling. Prior to completing the qualitative phase of this study, the auditor reviewed all data collection and analysis results of this study to determine if the primary researcher had conducted a quality, rigorous, and comprehensive study. The auditor, as a disinterested party, also reviewed areas where bias and/or assumptions may have entered into the research (Patton, 2015). The auditor had no stake in the outcome of this study or its future publication.

Researcher Assumptions and Biases

For the purposes of this study, the primary researcher assumed there may be a relationship between sexual orientation and spiritual development but he did not know what that relationship was, if any existed, for the participants. The primary researcher had academic interest in multicultural and LGBQQ research topics as well as the topics of

spiritual development in the counseling profession. He was a member of a church affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association. He was actively involved in religious life since he was a young boy, originally within fundamentalist evangelical Christian communities. His spiritual identity underwent a transformation during his undergraduate college stage of life from religious to non-theist to his current identification as a Christian agnostic and humanist. To his awareness, his sexual orientation was not a factor during the college stage of his spiritual development. The spiritual dimension of his life has been a complex and fluid experience. The primary researcher believed the voices of LGBQQ members of society are marginalized in discussions of spiritual development, believed it is important to include their perspectives in the academic record, and believed it is important to explore implications for professionals working with LGBQQ college students concerning their spiritual development. The auditor may have also brought assumptions and biases to the research process as a doctoral student in counseling or from other personal beliefs and values concerning her views on sexual orientation or spirituality.

Participant Selection

Qualitative research methods involved semi-structured interviews with 10 participants (Creswell, 2006; Morse, 2000), including archival data from two previously conducted interviews as part of a pilot study for this dissertation. Due to gender differences noted in the literature (Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis et al., 2004; Mullikin, 2006; Soet & Martin, 2007), gender diversity in the sample was highly desirable. Traditionally, qualitative studies using phenomenology utilize a sample of between six to 10 research participants and sample saturation is defined by thick descriptions of the

phenomenon under study rather than by achieving theoretical saturation via increased sample size (Creswell, 2006; Morse, 1995, 2000). All interview participants were adult, former college students who self-identify as LGBQQ. Choosing former college students instead of current students added the retrospective element required by the phenomenological tradition used in this study (Van Manen, 1990).

Sampling Procedures

The primary researcher interviewed 10 participants. To ensure diversity in the sample, specifically with regards to gender, purposeful sampling strategies were employed. Participants were recruited using snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is a method that allows for inclusion of the typical case for the population under study and permits the researcher to network with research participants to locate additional individuals meeting the typical case to interview (Patton, 2015). To include the broadest view of spiritual expression, having no stated spiritual or religious identity or no stated interest in spiritual development was not an exclusion criterion. This study was open to the individual experiences of the participants and was interested in participants with a wide spectrum of spiritual identities from none to very spiritual or religious.

As the sampling method permitted, the study was open to a wide variety of age, ethnicity and other cultural characteristics among members in order to gather from a diverse group and was particularly interested in gender diversity in the sample. The retrospective requirement for research participants may have assisted in providing a richer exploration of experiences as participants reflected on their time in college. This study was also open to a wide spectrum of former college students including students who attended two or four-year higher education institutions and/or students who may

have attended but not completed, as their drop out experiences could be connected to intersections between spiritual development and sexual orientation. Participant statuses for these areas (i.e. sexual orientation, spiritual identity, and former college student) were assessed on the demographic questionnaire (Appendix A).

Specific Participant Selection Procedures

The primary researcher conducted two interviews as part of a pilot study for this dissertation. One of these participants was a known associate of the primary researcher and a colleague familiar with the pilot study recommended the second. Both pilot participants were graduate students at the southeastern Virginia university the researcher attended. Additional participants for this study networked from the pilot participants and other known expert informants who connected the primary researcher to typical case participants. After each new interview was conducted the primary researcher asked the participant to connect the primary researcher with possible interviewees who meet the typical case of LGBQQ former college students. The primary researcher then contacted these possible participants requesting their consent to participate in the study. Demographic information, such as age, gender, sexual orientation, and spiritual/religious affiliation, was collected on each participant.

Gaining Entry

Initial entry into the field was gained by conversations with the pilot study participants, who represented typical cases for the study, and expert informants. Once the primary researcher had acquired names of potential participants, he contacted them to inquire about their interest in the study, establishing interview times and places convenient for participants following consent to join the study. New participants

snowballed or networked from earlier participants.

Participant Profiles

The 10 participants included five male and five female adult, former college students who self-identified as LGBQQ. Participant age ranged from 23 to 50 (*SD*= 8.32, *M* = 27). Racial/ethnic identification was African American (*n*= 7) and White/European American (*n*= 3). Participant sexual orientation was gay (*n*= 5), bisexual (*n*= 2), lesbian (*n*= 1), and queer (*n*= 2). One bisexual participant also indicated the term *fluid* to describe her sexual orientation and one queer participant indicated the term *bisexual* also applied. Two participants indicated an early awareness of their LGBQQ sexual orientation by the age of 13. Participants described their relationship status as single (*n*= 7) and partnered/married (*n*= 3). Participants could select multiple responses concerning how publically "out" they were about their sexual orientation. Responses were "out" to: friends (*n*= 6), family (*n*= 6), coworkers (*n*= 4), out to everyone (*n*= 4).

Five participants did not respond to the item *age you enrolled in first college degree program*, the remaining indicated the following ages: 17 (*n*= 2), 18 (*n*= 2), and 19 (*n*= 1). Participants indicated the highest degree they completed as bachelors (*n*= 2) and masters (*n*= 8). Of those participants currently enrolled in education, (*n*= 4) were working on a doctorate degree, and (*n*= 2) were working on a master's degree. Participants could use multiple terms to indicate their religious or spiritual identity/affiliation prior to attending undergraduate college and they described it using the terms: Christian (*n*= 8), Baptist (*n*= 5), fundamentalist (*n*= 2), United Church of Christ (*n*= 1), questioning (*n*= 2), active with family (*n*= 1). Participants could use multiple terms to indicate their current religious or spiritual identity/affiliation and they described it using the terms: none (*n*= 2),

questioning (n= 4), fundamentalist (n= 1), Baptist (n= 3), Christian (n= 5), non-active (n= 2), Buddhist (n= 2), spiritual (n= 1).

Four of the participants graduated from the same rural public college in Western Virginia for their undergraduate education (n= 2 female, n= 2 male, n= 4 African American), and two attended the same private metropolitan college in Western Virginia (n= 2 female, n= 2 African American). The other four participants attended undergraduate colleges in Virginia, North Carolina, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. One participant originally attended college in Ohio but dropped out. He later attended undergraduate college as a nontraditional student at a private evangelical Christian college in eastern Virginia.

Participant Confidentiality and Safety Measures

To maintain the confidentiality, privacy, and safety of participants the primary researcher implemented several strategies. The primary researcher established private interview sites, complying with participant requests for comfort, prior to conducting the interviews and communicated them to the participants. The primary researcher assigned each participant a number, known only to him, to protect the identity of participants during the study and all identifying information was removed from study documents. All information pertaining to the study was stored in a locked cabinet in the primary researcher's home office. The primary researcher had each participant review and sign an informed consent form prior to conducting interviews and explained participation is voluntary and would end at any point in the research process by request of the participant. Participants were given the opportunity to member check the interview transcriptions to clarify, modify, or delete any data; however, only two participants replied to member checking requests. One participant copy edited his transcript closely to correct spelling

errors and clarify one misheard phrase. The second participant added four clarifications to statements, either correcting or extending what she had said, in track changes on the transcript. The primary researcher was granted approval from the Human Subjects Review Committee prior to conducting the study. As part of this process, the primary researcher gained approval to use archival data collected in two interviews from a pilot study conducted using the same qualitative methodology and interview protocol detailed in this dissertation.

Individual Interviews

The method of data collection for this study was interviews conducted with each research participant. Interviewing is a primary methodological strategy of a phenomenological study to acquire in-depth information concerning the essence of participants' experience (Patton, 2015). The primary researcher interviewed each participant once using a semi-structured format. Interview questions explored the breadth of the participants' lived experiences during college with spirituality and their sexual orientation during this time as well as explored possible intersections of these two phenomena. Each interview took approximately 45 to 60 minutes to complete and contained 10 predetermined questions, allowing time and space for additional questions to arise organically within the interviews concerning the lived experiences of the participants. Interviews took place after the participants signed consent forms and completed the demographic sheet. The primary researcher conducted each interview with the participants in person in a pre-arranged space that promoted privacy and confidentiality. Each interview was recorded.

Individual interview questions for initial interviews. The primary researcher

piloted the following interview questions with two participants prior to conducting this study. Following the pilot interviews, the primary researcher asked participants for their feedback or suggestions for change, but neither participant offered changes. Before beginning the interview, the primary researcher provided each participant with the definition of terms listed in chapter one. The interview questions were:

1. Thinking specifically about your undergraduate education, how would you define your college experience overall?

   -What specific college experiences influenced your spirituality, if any?
2. How would you define your spiritual or religious identity prior to entering college?
3. What, if any, spiritual or religious practices did you engage in prior to entering college?
4. Can you explain what, if any, spiritual or religious identity you have now in your life?
5. What, if any, spiritual or religious practices do you engage in now in your life?
6. How would you define your sexual orientation during college?
7. What influence, if any, did your sexual orientation have on you during college?
8. Thinking back upon your college stage of life, how did your sexual orientation influence, if at all, your spiritual development during college?
9. How did your spirituality as an LGB person change, if it did, as a result of your college experience?
10. Aside from your sexual orientation, what influenced, if anything, your spiritual development during college?

11. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Individual interview probes. The primary researcher employed probes throughout each interview to explore participants' answers in more detail. Questions 2-5 were designed to ascertain what, if any, changes may have occurred in participants' spiritual development and/or changes to specific religious or spiritual practices (e.g., prayer, church attendance) before, during, and after their time in college. The primary researcher used specific and general probes to capture this information. Examples of specific and general probes are as follows:

1. Please discuss any incidents or shifts influencing changes to your spirituality or spiritual practices prior to entering college.
2. Please discuss any incidents or shifts influencing changes to your spirituality or spiritual practices since you began college.
3. Please discuss any incidents or shifts influencing changes to your spirituality or spiritual practices since you left college.
4. How, if at all, have things changed over time?
5. Can you give me specific examples?
6. Can you tell me more about that experience?

Rationale. The primary researcher designed the initial question to establish the tone of the interview and capture a global perspective concerning the lived experiences of the participants' college experience. The primary researcher developed additional questions to capture the lived experiences of the phenomenon under study and to answer the research question pertaining to how having an LGBQQ sexual orientation influenced, if at all, college students' spiritual development. Additionally, the primary researcher de-

signed questions to explore any unknown factors that may have influenced the participants' spiritual development during their time in college beyond their sexual orientation. The primary researcher further designed questions to explore the past and present religious or spiritual identity and practices of participants, which may have indicated and captured the participants' lived experience concerning the relationship between sexual orientation and spiritual development.

Data Analysis

The primary researcher began the analysis process by completing detailed contact summary sheets after each interview. The primary researcher conducted and recorded the interviews and began the verbatim transcription process immediately after each respective interview. Following the transcription, he sent the participants copies for member checking and made any requested changes. He was the sole person to transcribe the interviews. The primary researcher bracketed his assumptions and noted any biases that could have influenced the horizontalization process prior to the analysis/reduction of transcriptions. As needed, the primary researcher wrote reflexive memos following interviews due to certain feelings experienced during the interview. Reflexive memos assisted the primary researcher in the bracketing process before and after each interview and helped with his awareness of subjectivity. The primary researcher conducted all analysis and reviewed findings with his auditor for verification and accuracy.

Data Reduction

The primary researcher began the data analysis process by creating an a priori codebook from keywords from the literature review. The primary researcher first displayed these keywords in a concept map. He then used horizontalization to identify

non-overlapping statements in the first transcript. This process was repeated with each transcript. Throughout the data analysis, the primary researcher created codebooks from identified meaning units of participant data to develop textural themes. A final codebook was created that includes textural and structural themes. The primary researcher then created a cross-case display illustrating the textural-structural description of the phenomenon across all participants. As a final step, the primary researcher reviewed the final codebook and case display with his auditor to address rigor, quality, and comprehensiveness. The textural and structural themes identified from the results of this qualitative phase of the study were used to generate items for the quantitative instrument in combination with several themes identified from the literature review (e.g., spiritual struggle).

Data Management

Data management represents those tools a researcher uses throughout a study to organize, protect, and track incoming data (Hays & Singh, 2012). Data management often transforms as the study progresses and represents some of the first methods to explain data (Hays & Singh, 2012). The primary researcher utilized the following data management strategies (a) completed contact summary sheets after each interview to capture personal observations and make note of important elements, themes, or discrepancies in the interview; (b) utilized case displays to visually organize data; (c) utilized memoing as needed to highlight information or note discrepancies in interviews; (d) kept all data in locked file cabinets and/or password protected on computers (Hays & Singh, 2012). All data collected from participants had all identifying information removed and utilized an anonymous identification code only known to the primary

researcher (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Trustworthiness Strategies

Trustworthiness, comparable to reliability and validity in quantitative research, is the level of rigor contained in the study design and analysis, i.e., how much readers trust the study results (Hays & Singh, 2012; Patton, 2015). The primary researcher employed multiple strategies in this study to ensure the trustworthiness of the research design and results including creating an audit trail, memoing, and utilizing an external auditor. The primary researcher ethically validated this study via reflexive journaling, as needed, which further contributed to trustworthiness. The primary researcher utilized field notes and memos, used thick description in coding, and created an audit trail to ensure credibility in this study. The primary researcher used thick description to contribute to the transferability of this study. To address dependability in the study, the primary researcher sent participants completed interview transcriptions for member checking. The primary researcher further enhanced dependability by employing an external auditor to review all final data analysis. In addition to the methods already described, the primary researcher established the confirmability of this study through the analysis of data using bracketing of assumptions and objectively reported data throughout the study.

Strategies to maintain objectivity. It is essential that the primary researcher implement measures to maximize objectivity (Hays & Singh, 2012). The primary researcher acknowledges that he brings beliefs, values, and assumptions into all research projects he conducts which need to be set aside to prevent them from interfering in the study. The primary researcher bracketed his assumptions, setting aside any personal beliefs, values, and biases he brought to the study, prior to engaging in data analysis

(Hays & Singh, 2012). To aid in this process, the primary researcher wrote reflexive memos throughout the study process to capture his own feelings or thoughts concerning the research experience as needed (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Strategies to maintain subjectivity. When engaging in qualitative research it is also important to recognize and utilize subjectivity appropriately (Hays & Singh, 2012). Subjectivity, or the researcher's awareness of the phenomenon under study, cannot be avoided completely and must be addressed (Hays & Singh, 2012). Strategies to address subjectivity, such as triangulating data sources, help to build trustworthiness of a study. To address subjectivity in this study, the primary researcher approached data collection with a sense of curiosity rather than as an expert, attempted member checking of interviews following transcriptions, and used an external auditor to review data analysis (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Quantitative Research Phase

Developed from the qualitative stage of research, this stage of the methodology explored the intersection of sexual orientation and spiritual development in LGBQQ former college students by distributing the Spirituality and Sexual Orientation Integration Instrument (SSOII).

Item Development

Initial items for the inventory came from the literature concerning the influence of sexual orientation on the spiritual development of college students. In particular, initial items reflected the literature concerning the potential influence of factors such as spiritual struggle, the coming out process, and the impact of multiple identities for LGBQQ students (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Bryant, 2011; Gold & Stewart, 2011). The textural and

structural themes detailed in the final codebook were used to formulate items and potential subscales. For example, pilot study analysis identified themes under the categories of supportive factors, ontological factors, religious factors, and sexual orientation factors which could have turned into items on subscales following analysis (Snow, 2012). From a pool of 34 codes, 18 of which had multiple sub-codes, the primary researcher developed a final 61 item instrument, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5).

Content Validation

Content validity for the SSOII was addressed through expert review of the instrument. The primary researcher recruited five expert reviewers who were asked to rank each item for how well it fit each potential subscale. Reviewers were doctoral-level experts in the field of counselor education and research with knowledge of the subjects of spiritual development, LGBQQ sexual orientation, and/or experience in instrument design. Four of the researchers were specifically active in LGBQQ related counseling research. Each reviewer and their qualifications were previously known personally, professionally, or via reputation to the primary researcher and were solicited through an emailed recruitment letter asking for their participation as expert reviewers. Five reviewers were initially solicited and they all agreed to serve in this capacity. Reviewers were also asked to complete a demographic sheet detailing their diversity characteristics, including age, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and spiritual identity.

Expert Reviewer Profiles

The expert reviewers for the SSOII included three women and two men, each of whom was a doctoral-level counselor educator. Ages ranged from 29 to 52 (SD= 9.42,

M= 31). Each identified as White/European American. One identified as gay and four identified as heterosexual. The spiritual/religious identity of each reviewer as reported at the time of the study was (a) "Catholic raised, currently confused;" (b) "Christian/Protestant;" (c) "Christian/Protestant/Episcopalian;" (d) "very spiritual, sort of religious (Episcopal);" (e) "Christian, Buddhist, panentheist."

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis is used to explore the factor structure of an instrument and to identify the underlying relationships between variables (Field, 2013). It is particularly useful to create a simple structure when there is no specific hypothesis about the structures of an instrument. Exploratory factor analysis using a principal axis factoring extraction method with an oblique rotation identified factors greater than eigenvalues 1.0; the extracted factors were supported with inspection of a scree plot (Field, 2013). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity were run to verify the sampling adequacy for the analysis (Field, 2013). Instruments and demographic questions were distributed to participants electronically via email link to an online version of the instrument (i.e., Qualtrics).

Participant Selection

Participants consisted of current and former college students. Participants for the quantitative phase included heterosexual individuals, permitting comparison with the LGBQQ sample. Participants were sent a link to the online instrument via email and through listservs and social networks to complete the SSOII. Demographic information was asked of each participant following completion of an electronic informed consent document. Due to gender differences noted in the literature (Bryant & Astin, 2008;

Dennis et al., 2004; Mullikin, 2006; Soet & Martin, 2007), gender diversity was highly desirable in this sample. Following the rule of 150 (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999) for exploratory factor analysis, at least 150 participants were needed to complete exploratory factor analysis.

Instrumentation

Spirituality and Sexual Orientation Integration Instrument. The purpose of the SSOII was to explore within a larger sample results from phase 1 of this study concerning the potential influence sexual orientation or other factors had on the spiritual development of current or former college students. This exploration within a larger population looked for demographic differences in how factors are endorsed based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other demographic factors. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating greater influence of a particular factor or greater agreement with a component of identity development.

Demographic questionnaire. Demographic information included age, gender identity, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, relationship status, level of outness (i.e., how publicly out the participants were concerning their sexual orientation), and other identifying information (e.g., relationship status). The demographics also include participants' highest degree completed, age they enrolled in their first college degree program, current education status if they were in school, any current religious or spiritual affiliations, and any pre-college religious or spiritual affiliations. The option to disclose beyond the given statuses of gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and relationship status on the demographic portion was provided to participants. Current or pre-college self-identified religious or spiritual affiliation questions were open ended to permit

participants to inclusively name their spiritual identities (e.g., Christian, Buddhist, Lutheran, non-spiritual, atheist). The demographic sheet is included in Appendix D.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected using the online tool Qualtrics. Requests for participants were solicited through various online listservs, social networks, personal contacts, and through direct requests to LGBQQ related organizations including: Counselor Education and Supervision Network Listserv (CESNET-L), Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC) listserv, Gay Christian Network, Campus Pride, BiNet USA, Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), GLAAD, and a major metropolitan LGBT center in southeastern Virginia. Additionally, participants were solicited via email lists through the southeastern Virginia university the primary researcher attended, including: doctoral, master's, and bachelor students connected to a counseling and human services department, the campus Safe Zone listserv, and the campus LGBT faculty and staff caucus. Listserv requests were sent in December 2014 and January 2015 multiple times. Data collection was closed on January 31, 2015.

Participant Sample

The sample consisted of 171 current or former college students. Eleven participants (6.4%) did not report demographics. Table 3 consists of demographics of 160 participants for age, sex, gender identity, race/ethnicity, relationship status, and demographics pertaining to sexual orientation, outness, and age of awareness of sexual orientation.

Table 3

Participant Demographics of SSOII Part A

Demographic	*R*	*M*	*SD*	Sample Distribution % (*n*)
Age	19 to 64	33.18	11.76	
Sex				
a. Female				66.1 (113)
b. Male				24.6 (42)
c. Intersex				.6 (1)
d. Two Spirit				1.2 (2)
e. Other				1.2 (2)
Gender Identity				
a. Masculine				22.2 (38)
b. Feminine				64.3 (110)
c. Transgender				1.8 (3)
d. Other				5.3 (9)
Race/Ethnicity				
a. Black/African American				18.7 (32)
b. Hispanic/Latin American				.6 (1)
c. Native American/First Nations				.6 (1)
d. Asian American				3.5 (6)
f. White/European American				60.2 (103)
g. Multiracial				7.0 (12)
h. Other				2.9 (5)
Sexual Orientation				
a. Lesbian				6.4 (11)
b. Gay				13.5 (23)
c. Bisexual				14.0 (24)
d. Questioning				2.9 (5)
e. Queer				3.5 (6)
f. Heterosexual				48.5 (83)
g. Pansexual				2.3 (4)
h. Other				2.3 (4)
Sexual Orientation Age of Awareness	1 to 33	12.93	6.09	
Relationship Status				
a. Single				29.8 (51)
b. Partnered/Married				55.0 (94)
c. Divorced				5.3 (9)
d. Other				3.5 (6)
Public Coming Out Timing				

a. Prior to College	33.3 (57)
b. During College	17.0 (29)
c. After College	8.8 (15)
d. Never Came Out	34.5 (59)
Public Outness Before College	
a. To No One	23.4 (40)
b. Friends	28.1 (48)
c. Family	19.9 (34)
d. Coworkers	11.7 (20)
e. Spiritual/Religious Group	8.8 (15)
f. Out to Everyone	42.1 (72)
g. Other	11.7 (20)
Public Outness During College	
a. To No One	14.0 (24)
b. Friends	32.2 (55)
c. Family	19.9 (34)
d. Coworkers	12.9 (22)
e. Spiritual/Religious Group	7.6 (13)
f. Out to Everyone	48.5 (83)
g. Other	8.2 (14)
Public Outness Currently	
a. To No One	5.3 (9)
b. Friends	31.0 (53)
c. Family	25.1 (43)
d. Coworkers	17.5 (30)
e. Spiritual/Religious Group	11.7 (20)
f. Out to Everyone	66.7 (114)
g. Other	7.0 (12)

Note. Percentage based on 160.

Table 4 contains summaries of participant information pertaining to demographic information about their college enrollment and status.

Table 4

Participant Demographics of SSOII Part B

Demographic	*R*	*M*	*SD*	Sample Distribution % (*n*)
Age of 1st College Degree	16 to 55	19.45	7.13	
Highest Degree Completed				
a. High School Diploma				11.1 (19)

b. Associate's	13.5 (23)
c. Bachelor's	24.6 (42)
d. Master's	33.9 (58)
e. Educational Specialist	1.8 (3)
g. Doctorate	8.8 (15)
Undergraduate College Type	
a. Traditional 4 Year College	69.6 (114)
b. 2-4 Year Community College	21.1 (36)
c. 2-4 Year Technical College	1.2 (2)
d. Completely Distance College	0
e. Hybrid Distance College	0
f. Other	1.8 (3)
Current Degree Enrollment	
a. Associate's	.6 (1)
b. Bachelor'	25.7 (44)
c. Master's	19.3 (33)
d. Educational Specialist	1.2 (2)
e. Doctorate	26.3 (45)
f. Not Applicable/Not Enrolled	20.5 (35)

Note. Percentage based on 160.

Table 5 contains a summary of participant information pertaining to spiritual/religious identity or affiliation prior to college and in their lives at the time of the study. This table only summarizes the identity/affiliation categories comprising 2% or more of the sample. Although predominantly Christian (approximately 73%), there was a wide representation of religious or spiritual identity/affiliation within the sample. Participants indicated over 50 different spiritual identity/affiliations (e.g., atheist, pagan, Muslim, Buddhist, Catholic, Latter Day Saint, Episcopalian, Mennonite, Jewish) and change within their spiritual or religious identity/affiliation is evident from comparing the distribution percentages prior to college and currently.

Table 5

Participant Demographics of SSOII Above 2% of Sample

Demographic	Sample Distribution % (*n*)
Spiritual/Religious Identity/Affiliation Prior to College	
Christian	15.2 (26)
Baptist	9.4 (16)
Catholic	9.4 (16)
Roman Catholic	5.8 (10)
Presbyterian	3.5 (6)
Southern Baptist	3.5 (6)
United Methodist	3.5 (6)
Nondenominational Christian	3.5 (6)
Lutheran	2.9 (5)
Pentecostal Christian	2.9 (5)
Evangelical Christian	2.3 (4)
LDS/Mormon	2.3 (4)
No Affiliation	9.4 (16)
Spiritual/Religious Identity/Affiliation Currently	
Christian	17.0 (29)
Baptist	4.7 (8)
Episcopalian	4.1 (7)
Nondenominational Christian	4.1 (7)
Spiritual But Not Religious	4.1 (7)
Agnostic	3.5 (6)
Buddhist	2.9 (5)
No Affiliation	18.7 (32)

Note. Percentage based on 160.

Validity Threats

Internal validity is defined as the extent to which an instrument measures what it intended to measure (i.e., causal relationships between variables) and external validity is the extent to which results can be generalized to larger populations (Heppner, Wampold, & Kivlignan, 2008). Examples of internal validity threats include history, maturation, instrumentation, attrition, and testing effects (Heppner et al., 2008). Examples of external

validity threats include the interaction of causal relationships with units, settings, outcomes, or treatment variations (Heppner et al., 2008).

Phase 1 Threats

Rather than discussing threats to validity for qualitative research, threats to the trustworthiness or to the truthfulness of the research are recognized as similar concepts (Hays & Singh, 2012). Possible threats, among others, to the trustworthiness of this study include the influence of bias and assumptions on the part of the primary researcher or auditor, utilizing a sample size that was inadequate to explore the phenomenon in question, failure to recognize patterns in data, or developing research questions that could not be answered (Hays & Singh, 2012). Although efforts were made to sensitively explore participants' experiences in the qualitative phase of this study, it is possible unknown participant factors entered into the interview process, including a participant's desire to provide socially desirable responses. Participants had the opportunity following interviews to review their transcripts for accuracy in an effort to correct for any errors or to permit them to change their responses.

Two specific potential threats to the trustworthiness of this study concern the subjective and conceptual natures of spirituality and spiritual development and how these concepts may be influenced by sexual orientation in the population under study, meaning participants may not have been in agreement with the definitions or the influences of these concepts upon their lives. Additionally, there may be other limitations of this study not known.

Phase 2 Threats

There were many potential threats to internal and external validity that may have

impacted phase 2 of this study (Heppner et al., 2008). The developed instrument may not have been sufficiently tested to draw accurate conclusions from its results. Other threats to the instrument distribution and collection, as well as instrument design errors (such as length or wording), could have influenced participants' responses including instrument completion, the lack of confirmatory factor analysis, and replicability of exploratory factor analysis could have led to reliability issues for the instrument. Additional threats to validity may include attrition from the instrument completion process, subject effects of participants giving answers they believed were expected, low response rates, or unknown bias within the sample. It is also possible that bias from experts selected to review the instrument may have influenced their feedback. An additional threat to validity could have come from the external threat of context-dependent mediation (Heppner et al., 2008). For example, there could have been a mediating relationship within one context that is absent from another, such as the potential influence of social class or some other context not evident from the literature or qualitative data used to construct the instrument (Heppner et al., 2008). Given the possible threats to validity, results may be difficult to generalize to a larger population and results are discussed within the context of this study. Unknown threats to external and internal validity may exist beyond those reported here.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Results of this exploratory sequential mixed methods study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) will be discussed in this chapter. The first phase of this study entailed a phenomenological exploration of the lived experiences of LGBQQ former college students concerning how their sexual orientation influenced, if at all, their spiritual development during college. Findings from this phenomenology were then used in a quantitative phase to develop an instrument to explore phase one results within a larger population.

Research Design

In exploratory sequential mixed methods designs, qualitative data collection and analysis leads to quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by a combined results interpretation. Such designs are appropriate to verify qualitative results within larger populations, to test hypotheses or theories when instruments are not available, and to discover unknown variables to study quantitatively (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For this study, the results of a phenomenology using semi-structured interviews led to the creation of a quantitative instrument and data collection. Mixed methods research designs have been used in several studies looking at intersections of spirituality and sexual orientation in LGBQQ populations, such as a mixed method study by Halkitis et al. (2009) exploring spiritual/religious meaning in LGQQ adults or a study by Sherry, Adelman, Whilde, and Quick (2010) exploring LGBQQ college students' perceptions of religion and spirituality.

Qualitative Research Phase

The qualitative phase of this study was conducted using the phenomenological research tradition (Patton, 2015) guided by a critical humanist paradigm (Plummer, 2011). Participants included 10 LGBQQ former college students who were interviewed once using a semi-structured format. Two interviews were completed as part of a pilot study for this dissertation. The primary researcher conducted each interview and transcribed them verbatim immediately following respective interviews. Interviews began in May 2014 and were completed by August 2014. Data analysis began in August 2014 and was completed by October 2014. Results of this first phase of the study explored the following research questions:

1. How, if at all, does having an LGBQQ sexual orientation influence college students' spiritual development?
2. What factors beyond sexual orientation, if any, influence LGBQQ college students' spiritual development during their time in college?

The following section details qualitative analyses procedures used in this study by the primary researcher. The primary researcher began the analysis process by completing detailed contact summary sheets after each interview. Contact summary sheets, used for early data management, summarize relevant details about each interview contact, including participant identifying information (e.g., date of interview, date of contact sheet completion), relevant themes, issues, discrepancies, and initial interviewer observations or new questions to ask future contacts (Hays & Singh, 2012). Following the transcription, the primary researcher sent participants copies for potential member checking and made any requested changes. Prior to analyzing the interview data, the

primary researcher bracketed his assumptions and noted any biases that could have influenced the horizontalization process. The primary researcher wrote reflexive memos based on personal responses to some of the interviews and after meeting with his auditor. The primary researcher conducted all analysis and reviewed findings with his auditor for verification and accuracy. The auditor was sent each transcript for review as well as preliminary and final codebooks and a cross-case display of codes. Following review of the material, the auditor emailed her feedback to the primary researcher and a meeting was held to discuss her questions and concerns. Once the auditor and primary researcher reached consensus on discrepancies, clarifications were made to the final codebook and cross-case display. The auditor completed study responsibilities in September 2014.

The initial codebook for this study began with the a priori codebook from the primary researcher's pilot study (Snow, 2012). Following each interview, the primary researcher engaged in horizontalization to identify themes, building from the pilot study. This led to 10 codebooks, plus two additional versions following auditor reviews. Throughout the data analysis, the primary researcher looked for textural themes to describe the essence of the participants' experiences, repeating the process for each transcript. During the horizontalization process, the primary researcher read, reviewed, compared, and collapsed themes. The primary researcher then created a final codebook containing 34 codes, 18 of which contained sub-codes.

The primary researcher then created a cross-case display illustrating the structural themes created from collapsing all codes. The primary researcher created a content-analytic summary table of all structural themes and textural codes, which included the amount of cases sharing each textural code (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). This

type of cross-case display explores and describes phenomena and is a useful conceptual analytic tool (Miles et al., 2014). Table 6 contains the cross-case display.

Table 6
Cross-Case Display: Content-Analytic Summary Table of Structural and Thematic Codes

Supportive Factors	**Ontological Factors**	**Religious Factors**	**Sexual Orientation Factors**	**College Factors**
Group Affiliation (4) Institutional Support (2) Peer Support (5)	Individual Development (9) Belonging (2) Identity Compartment-alization (4) Identity Integration (5) Personal/Family Tragedy (2) Mental Health or Stress Response (4)	Spiritual/Religious Affiliation (10) Spiritual/Religious Upbringing (9) Spiritual/Religious Identity (5) Spiritual/Religious Identity Acceptance (7) Spiritual/Religious Identity Rejection (4) Spiritual Struggle or Crisis (3) Personal Faith Practices (10) Public Faith Duties (8) Spiritual/Religious Congruence (5) Spiritual Seeking (4)	Sexual Orientation (10) Sexual Orientation Acceptance (9) Sexual Orientation Rejection (5) Discrimination Concerns (5) Outness Level (7) Early Awareness of Orientation (3) LGBQQ Mentorship (2) Coming Out as Sacrament (1)	College Success (9) Extracurricular Campus Cultural Activity (1) Academic Activity (4) Freedom & Independence (4) Racial/Ethnic College Influence (2) Interfaith Campus Diversity & Ministry (1) SAFE Zone Training (1)

Note. Structural codes in bold. Numbers indicate amount of cases sharing each thematic code.

The cross-case display, used in discussion with the auditor, was important for discovering a fifth structural theme (i.e., College Factors) in addition to the original four identified by the primary researcher. These five structural themes were interpersonal supportive factors, ontological factors, religious factors, sexual orientation factors, and college factors. Mutual exclusivity with themes was desirable, but not all codes fit perfectly into each structural category. Considerable discussion with the auditor resulted in placing

some codes into the best structural fit for them based on code definitions. This display does not include subthemes for textural codes as they were not utilized in developing the structural themes. However, the final codebook, containing all subthemes, may be found in Appendix B.

Overall, 34 codes were identified connected to the total conceptualization of the intersection of sexual orientation and spiritual development, which were further collapsed into five structural themes. Each structural theme and associated textural codes and sub-themes are presented in the next section with substantive participant quotes to illustrate with thick description the concepts and their connection to each other.

Supportive Factors

This structural theme included interpersonal factors participants experienced that were important to providing them support during college. Having strong interpersonal support during college is a potential factor in assisting participants to navigate complexities in sexual orientation, spiritual development, or the intersection of these two forces. Textural codes connected to this structural theme were *group affiliation*, *institutional support*, and *peer support*.

Group affiliation. This code was defined as formal/official secular organizational and group identification and included the sub-codes *academic*, *campus*, and *community*. Four participants described their college experience as a time of involvement with various groups that contributed meaningful interpersonal support. One example of group affiliation is positive academic affiliation, similar to college pride. P001 discussed his strong academic group affiliation with his undergraduate college by stating "[my southern private college] was the only school to which I applied and…I don't think I could have

picked a better school that was a better fit for me." Throughout his interview, P001 further described strong pride in and identification with his alma mater, stating "... [My school] really nurtured me, I had a lot of good experiences, of life changing experiences...I don't think I could have gotten that rich of an experience anywhere else." This group affiliation was essential to his growth during college.

Positive group affiliation was also present in the form of campus organizations that offered interpersonal support. P003 enrolled in several campus groups that helped her feel connected to her undergraduate college experience after wanting to transfer to a college closer to home following a difficult freshman year. Despite family support for the transfer, campus group affiliations helped her to become "engaged" in important ways. She stated:

> ...I just felt very overwhelmed [my first year] and I thought I should just go back home...it was kind of that, they were right and I was wrong, I should just go ahead and cut my losses and go back home. But, I started getting involved in two organizations. One was Women of Color and one was NAACP, so I became active in those two organizations and then in my sophomore year I joined a sorority and from then on I was kind of super busy all the time.

Affiliating with these campus groups, and later becoming involved in leadership positions within them, connected her deeper and provided more support. She stated, "Yeah, I started interacting with more people. I went from only talking to two people to talking to all sorts of people all the time." Thus, she did not transfer and instead had a rewarding college experience.

Additional examples of academic and community group affiliations included

academic honors societies or community service groups such as Rotary International or the YMCA, involvement which could provide additional support for interpersonal development for college students.

Institutional support. This code was defined as support provided overtly by an institution and included the sub-codes *college* and *spiritual/religious*. It was experienced by two participants. Having official institutional support was significant for helping P001 feel such a strong group affiliation during college. After being asked what made his college experience so rich, he stated "just the people that I met, the administrators who...opened themselves to me, that assisted me through the process [of college]. If I had difficulties, they were always there for me." P001 further explained the institutional support he received as an openly gay, Christian student on his campus from college administrators:

> Yeah, I was able to get support for gospel choir to, you know, because...oh, [snaps fingers]...the dean of the divinity school, I knew him too. I was always able to get support and I think that garnered a lot of respect from them because I still had my strong religious views and still was firm in my sexuality.

This quote demonstrated dual college and spiritual/religious support at a Baptist-affiliated campus through the divinity school administration, as well.

In addition to having official college support, the sub-code of spiritual/relgious institutional support indicated positive integration of sexual orientation and spirituality in individuals. P001 also discussed spiritual/religious institutional support further at college and in the community:

> I mean, there was some gay affirming [churches]...the choir would always sing at

> [a local] Presbyterian church and it was gay affirming…[My college] Baptist church was the church that meets on campus and they did a [same sex] commitment ceremony…which is, like, the chapel on campus.

Receiving official recognition of same sex relationships from his campus church provided additional institutional support to P001's sexual orientation and spiritual development.

However, not all institutional support is this overt or official. P002, who attended a very conservative evangelical Christian college in eastern Virginia, described several situations on his campus in which he came out publically to school officials, faculty, and students about his sexual orientation. Due to official policy and a code of ethics at his college, the act of coming out, as well as engaging in same sex relationships, were grounds for expulsion, yet he was not sanctioned or expelled.

Discussing one instance of coming out on campus, he stated, "I came out in devotionals and some of the classes, got called into the deacon's office- 'why did you choose to do that,' 'well, if I can't come out at a Christian university, where can I come out?'" When asked if coming out had adverse effects upon him at college he said "it wasn't adverse … [but] there was a lot of fear- having come out and to get called in [unheard phrase] and the code of ethics and I don't want that. That [expulsion] was my biggest fear." Although, officially he should have been removed from the school he was not sanctioned and went on to receive accolades from the school. P002 stated after he came out "…I served on the council of graduate students for the school of education. I was actually awarded the 2006-2007 outstanding bachelor of arts undergraduate student [award]." Thus, institutional support may appear on a spectrum from official to unofficial

support.

Peer support. This code was defined as support provided informally by peers and included the sub-codes *campus*, *spiritual/religious*, and *community*. Five participants discussed peer support of some kind. Campus peer support can be illustrated through the words of P010:

> I would say...I think in terms of the people I hung out with, I definitely found myself wanting to be around individuals who were open-minded because I did have friends who were very openly gay or openly lesbian and such, for me even if I didn't identify strongly one way or another I still did not want to be around people who were negative towards those individuals. So, it definitely influenced who I was around and who I became close to or drifted away from, depending on what they were saying or talking about or their opinions.

P001 also discussed the importance of having peer support at college. It was on campus that he discovered his closest peer support group during college, stating:

> Yeah, and the fact that the group of friends that I chose to be around were all going through the exact same thing at the exact same time and I didn't really know it until, I found out some things and I was like, for real, [surprised]... we're all gay?

This peer group coincidentally lived in the same dorm- further contributing to the campus peer support P001 experienced during college, support he felt was essential to his sexual orientation development.

P009 also discussed the importance of peer support during college. For her this support also extended into her post-college community life. When discussing her friends'

acceptance of her faith and sexual orientation in college she stated:

> So, while I was in undergrad- in fact I still have some of the same friendships and relationships that I cultivated in undergrad and they are still steeped in religion, I mean it is really interesting to, that's a whole other topic, but I think that at this point I am more comfortable with myself because I am outside of that structure of a campus that everything's fine and my friends know, same friends from 10 years ago, that this is who I am and they are 100% okay with it.

Ontological Factors

This structural theme described aspects of participants' experiences during college that influenced their personal views and beliefs about their existence, opinions of self or family, and related concepts, whether positive or negative, connected to integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development. Textural codes for this structural theme were *individual development*, *belonging*, *identity compartmentalization*, *identity integration*, *personal/family tragedy*, and *mental health or stress response*.

Individual development. This code was defined as growth and transformation experiences on a spectrum and included the sub-codes *personal* and *spiritual*. Nine participants described factors promoting individual development, either personal or spiritual, which were unique to their college experience. For example, P002 described his individual spiritual development during college this way:

> [Initially during college] I think I was firmly entrenched within the traditional church mindset. I don't think that that really entered until later. Um, if we are looking at...going to college the first time I started going to Unity [Church] at that time. Unity is more of a spiritualist church. So, I would say that [college] was the

> start of, okay, looking more at the overall…type of aspects of religions, and then trying to integrate everything, what was said, what I believed, what don't I believe.

In this way, college was the impetus for individual spiritual development that continued throughout P002's life.

Belonging. This code was defined as feeling acceptance by peers/others within various settings on a spectrum and included the sub-codes *campus*, *community*, and *spiritual/religious*. Only two participants specifically discussed belonging in their interview. Throughout his interview, P004 expressed distrust of many heterosexual males based on past experiences, but in college he found a sense of acceptance with male peers. He explained his feelings of campus belonging:

> In terms of other males…[at his western Virginia undergraduate college], um, surprisingly a lot of the males that I befriended, they were really accepting towards me. And they're not questioning at all, not bisexual they are completely heterosexual, and they never really judged me and we are still friends until this day. So, that was something that I learned and was able to develop- that everybody is not an enemy and everybody is not going to cut your throat if you are open and honest with them, you know, every male, you know, they aren't going to look down on you.

This sense of campus belonging was foreign to P004, based on his pre-college experiences, and contributed to his own growing sense of acceptance of his sexual orientation as a gay man.

Identity compartmentalization. This code, discussed by four participants, was

defined as disconnection of one's religious orientation identity from one's sexual orientation identity, or separate selves. For example, despite the fact that P001 and P004 strongly identified as gay Christian men, when it came to expressing their sexual orientation within their faith group they were not out, although they were out in other social spheres (e.g., with friends, coworkers). P004 described how we kept his identity compartmentalized by having two different Bibles. In what appears to be a contradiction, he said "that's when I was in my developmental phase in terms of combining the two, spirituality and my sexual orientation, and so I have two Bibles. One that I take in public and one that I have for myself." His private Bible contained highlighted scriptural passages connected to sexual orientation such as:

> The passages that I looked up on Sodom and Gomorrah and other ones that talk about abomination and other ones that condemn homosexuality, I actually have little footnotes...tabs, to mark them. Almost like a professor would, to say this is what I have. Obviously, I wouldn't take that out into public.

Even though he personally accepted his sexual orientation, he kept one Bible for public religious usage, where he is not out, and one Bible for private usage, which reflected his sexual orientation, thus, keeping each side separate from the other.

Although it is evident from his words that P004 perceived his sexual orientation and spirituality were integrated, to an outside observer keeping these two parts separated, and his sexual orientation a secret within his religious community, implies a degree of compartmentalization. Although only four participants specifically discussed identity compartmentalization in their interview, six of the 10 participants indicated on their demographic sheets they were not out to religious groups but were out to others (e.g.,

family, coworkers) in their lives, potentially indicating a higher amount of compartmentalization within the sample or differences in self-perception of the concept (demographic sheets were completed before the interview).

Identity integration. This code, discussed by five participants, was defined as the interconnection of one's spiritual/religious identity with one's sexual orientation into an integrated self-view. P005 gave an explanation of her integrated identity as a lesbian and as a spiritual person:

> I think what I'm really trying to say here is that I have never wanted my sexual identity to be the most prominent aspect of my whole identity as a person. Most of the gay individuals at my undergrad, they embraced their sexuality so much that that part of their identity was the most important part- I don't think I ever wanted to be a part of that. Which also ties to the Buddhism...the more I focused on who I was as a whole person, the better able I was to incorporate my sexual identity into other facets of myself and not make it a big deal. If that makes sense?

It should be noted that while five participants discussed their identities as integrated in their interviews, one of them (P004) strongly stated he was not out to his religious group, also indicating a level of identity compartmentalization. Taken together, the themes of identity integration and identity compartmentalization may be very complex concepts depending on perspective (i.e., internal vs. external) and/or may change upon self-reflection, such as via a data collection interview discussion.

Personal/family tragedy. This code was defined as experiences connected to personal/family tragedies, such as death or illness, and the after effects of such tragedies. This code included the sub-codes *push towards spirituality* and *push away from*

spirituality. Two participants, P003 and P004, experienced the death of a parent during college that led to spiritual struggle (discussed further under the religious factors structural theme). For P003, when asked about what college experiences influenced her spirituality she stated "that's when my mom died, so more so on that side than on a sexuality side. But, yeah I stopped going to church after that." P003's experience of loss directly caused her to stop attending church due to the spiritual struggle from events surrounding her loss, pushing her away from spirituality.

For P004, personal tragedy impacted his life in graduate school (at the time of his interview he was aged 24). Asked what, aside from sexual orientation, influenced his spiritual development during college P004 stated:

> The loss of my father unexpectedly. He died in 2012. August of 2012 right before my second year of graduate school started. We were very close. He died unexpectedly. He was only 43. I was upset for a long time.

He discussed how this loss caused him to temporarily doubt his faith and question God, eventually leading him to an internal process of acceptance and a renewal of his faith, thus pushing him towards spirituality in the end.

Mental health or stress response. This code, discussed by four participants, was defined as experiences resulting in negative responses such as depression, anxiety, suicidality, destructive behaviors (e.g., using drugs, self-harm), and/or related responses and included the sub-codes *sexual orientation*, *spiritual/religious*, *academic*, *relationship*, and *unknown*. P006 offered the following description of a mental health response connected to the convergence of his sexual orientation and religion:

> When things started to become more real for me, I guess it will make more sense

> once I say this part- coming out was a process of first, just, of cutting [my body]. Cutting all the time. Cutting deep- you know, not even like freaking out, like, losing…like dissociating- like oh, my god what is going on? My brain just kind of…boom. And I would find myself in blood; you know just cutting in the mirror. And I, you know, friends couldn't figure it out- finally my friends were like, you gotta go see somebody, this is, you know, after awhile, I mean it was more than just once in awhile, it was all the time and it kept getting worse, and worse, and worse.

In the case of P005, she experienced an unknown stress response prior to college that caused her significant concern. Even after putting herself in therapy she still did not know with certainty what the response was from; she stated:

> I just didn't like my life [sounding exasperated]. You know, I don't know what it was. I was just very unhappy so, and I don't know why. I never could figure it out. I journaled [sic] a lot through high school and I'll go back and read those journals and be like wow. Life was a shit show. Holy crap! I'm surprised I'm still alive but…never any connection. I couldn't figure out why I was feeling this way. So, I don't know, now looking back possibly it could have been related to sexual identity development. I don't know.

P005, in retrospect, believed this unknown response could have been linked to sexual orientation but years later the cause was still mysterious to her, especially considering she expressed an uneventful coming out process, with full acceptance of her sexual orientation by her family, friends, and herself.

Religious Factors

This structural theme included codes that were connected most directly to participants' spiritual/religious experiences during college. Textural codes for this structural theme were *spiritual/religious affiliation*, *spiritual/religious upbringing*, *spiritual/religious identity*, *spiritual/religious identity acceptance*, *spiritual/religious identity rejection*, *spiritual struggle or crisis*, *informal faith practices*, *formal faith practices*, *spiritual/religious congruence*, and *spiritual seeking*.

Spiritual/religious affiliation. This code was defined as personal identification with a particular spiritual or religious group, denomination, or system of belief that may change during or after college. Ten participants discussed this code in their interviews. Demographic responses included Christian, Baptist, none, fundamentalist, United Church of Christ, Buddhist, and questioning. Despite having a strong Christian upbringing, P007 described his spiritual/religious affiliation as questioning, stating:

> I was that child that always asked questions and then people got tired of me asking questions very early, because I always really questioned religion in general, particularly because the churches that I go to are predominately Black churches, so for me I definitely questioned a lot particularly because of my sexuality, because I don't really think who I am, who I choose to love, and how I express that love is a sin, so for me that was a big issue. So, I think prior to entering college I was definitely questioning my faith or my spirituality.

Further, P007 indicated he knew he was gay his entire life and yet was raised by parents who were both Christian ministers to whom he is not out concerning his sexual orientation or spiritual/religious affiliation.

P006 described the changing nature of his spiritual/religious affiliation this way:

> ...I feel very spiritual and I've been really interested in Buddhist teachings. I enjoy those. I still believe in God. I believe there is a higher power. I don't identify- I don't read the Bible- I don't identify as much with those teachings. For the longest time, I was what a lot of people consider a gay Christian. So, that part has not been an issue. I identified as a Christian that believed that those were misinterpreted- that the verses in the Bible that people use against homosexuals were misinterpreted. But as I come to be now, I take from- I guess I'm taking from different religions in a sense. What makes sense to me and a lot of the acts- like I meditate, and the acts from Buddhism make a lot of sense. I still believe in God though. I feel very spiritual.

Spiritual/religious upbringing. This code was defined as family of origin spiritual/religious identification and involvement or heritage. Although discussed specifically by nine participants, all participants reported receiving some degree of a Christian spiritual/religious upbringing; in some cases that upbringing was very pronounced. For example, P007's parents were directly involved in ministry. He said, "Both my parents are Christian ministers, so I was pretty much in church every day of the week." Although his parents no longer held church posts, his family life still centered on religion, even though he had identified his spiritual/religious affiliation as questioning from a young age.

Another example of a strong spiritual/religious upbringing comes from P010. She stated the following:

> I would say...hm. Strong foundation. So, I think coming from a family where,

> you know, every conversation we had wasn't about religion but we went to church on Sunday. Baptist church in the city of [home town]. And I got baptized when I was young. Most of my parents friends, like some of the core group they hung out with, were parents from the church. So we had about five or six families that always got together, all the kids got together, and then doing Sunday school, helping out with Sunday school, and always in the choir, from like toddler all the way up to going to college. So, for me, it was just one of those strong foundations.

For her, this "strong foundation" extended into everyday life and comprised her primary social groups growing up.

Spiritual/religious identity. This code, discussed by five participants, was defined as one's personal identification, on a spectrum (i.e., low, medium, high), as religious or spiritual and included sub-codes *pre-college*, *college*, and *present*. P004 described all three sub-codes within one statement:

> [My spiritual/religious identity] was weaker [*pre-college*] than it is now [*present*]. It is super strong now. Before…I have always identified as a Christian, you know, you are always taught to pray, and believe and stuff like that, but before undergrad, you don't really, you want to do it but it is easy to slip away from it because you are living with mom and dad so everything's paid for…everything is done for you and, you have general teenage frustrations but for the most part you don't have to worry about where rent is coming from [or other expenses]…So, before [*pre-college*] it wasn't all that strong because I didn't have anything to worry about. I would go church, but if I didn't feel like it I didn't. And that's just what it was. In adulthood…in undergrad [*college*] it got a little bit stronger. We

would go to the different types of campus ministries but it wasn't as strong as it is today [*present*].

P009 described a shift from pre-college spiritual/religious identity to her present conception this way:

I will say that now I no longer go to church, so, I am not affiliated with any church. I also have...the way that I am spiritual, quote, unquote, changed in that I do a lot of quiet meditation. So, my way of thinking has gone from being part of this huge religious umbrella to being more of this personal connection to nature, with my personal god.

Spiritual/religious identity acceptance. This code was defined as the acceptance process concerning spiritual/religious identity on a spectrum (i.e., low, medium, high), that may involve questioning or doubt by self or others and included the sub-codes *self*, *family*, and *peers*. In consultation with the auditor, this code and the corresponding code spiritual/religious identity rejection, were seen as distinct processes from each other, with potentially different contributing factors and were not compressed accordingly into one code with acceptance and rejection as sub-codes, but two separate codes. This code was described by seven participants. For most participants, the words of P010 sum up their experience of a gradual process of acceptance of an individual spiritual/religious identity without any spiritual struggle:

Yeah, I was going to say, I don't think there was a moment like that- a crisis- I think, for me again, it was more a gradual- but really those four years [of college] just thinking and wondering and seeing all the differences around me and really trying to put those together.

Spiritual/religious identity rejection. This code was defined as the rejection process concerning spiritual/religious identity on a spectrum (i.e., low, medium, high), that may involve questioning or doubt by self or others and included the sub-codes *self*, *family*, and *peers*. It was determined to be a distinct process from spiritual/religious identity acceptance without dramatic spiritual struggle described by four participants. When asked about current participation in spiritual practices, P007 described his self-rejection of a spiritual/religious identity, even though he attends church with his family and has many religious friends:

> On my own, I would say no. When I'm at home with my family, I definitely go to church very often. You know, I have friends who practice Islam, I have friends who are Jewish, and also Christian, so I definitely wouldn't mind going to those different spaces and kind of see what those are like, um, I think that right now, I think that...I wouldn't say [I'm] jaded, but definitely have very negative experiences with church- I think that has definitely kind of turned me off and definitely has kind of stopped me from pursuing my, uh, trying to figure out my faith at this point.

When asked about whether he was open with his family about his rejection of faith and if they would accept his questioning affiliation, P007 said "No [laughs]. That would be...so, me being gay and also not sure if I am Christian, that would be...[laughs] not an option for them. Uh, so [I'm] not at this point."

Spiritual struggle or crisis. This code, described by three participants, was defined as responding to events/experiences with a dramatic spiritual struggle or crisis as opposed to gradual changes in spiritual or religious development. In the extreme, spiritual

struggle/crisis may lead to total faith loss or sexual orientation denial. P006 described his spiritual struggle, in his case leading to acceptance of his sexual orientation but rejection of his conservative Christian faith:

> I guess part of the thing that I had to overcome or get over was the sense of homosexuality being wrong. And therefore, 'cause as you can imagine I had these night terrors. I had this horrible cutting habit, and I had to associate it with something and with being a religious person that I was at the time, I thought it was kind of 'of the devil.' It was his way of getting to me. Associating more with that and just, and almost a dark spiritual sense. Like that stuff was happening to me and I had to be strong, so that was a shift for me- not believing that any more. You know, those didn't happen because you were possessed by the devil or something, you know, those things happened because you had an extreme anxiety attack. It was more scientific. It was very…it is a little more obvious now because now you know you are gay so, and you had no idea before. And so, it was kind of coming up in that way, and having an enormous amount of anxiety attacks, an enormous amount of cutting. And you know, that's how they were expressing. It wasn't of the devil. It wasn't, you know, some demon. I thought it was a demon. I was told it was a demon. I had people pray over me and all that good stuff, you know? No! I was able to get passed that. That was almost a dark spirituality, a dark side of the Christian spirituality for me. And it is funny, because once I did understand everything I haven't had them since. Huh. Ironic, huh?

As discussed under ontological factors, spiritual struggle was present in two participants lives connected to the death of a parent. P004 discussed his process of

struggle connected to parental loss, resulting in a temporary loss of faith and feeling "forsaken" by God, but ultimately returning to his faith:

> I had started to go to church and then I stopped. I was upset and it was just another time where I felt that God had forsaken me. And he promised he wouldn't forsake me, but you did it again. And I just 'okay, you win.' And I just had to understand that life is so much bigger than me and that life is temporary. There is an eternal life that comes after this and I will be with him forever. This is temporary. We are here to do the work of the Lord to the best of our abilities and no one makes it out alive.

However, P003 had spiritual struggle experiences at her church following the death of her mother that lead to the rejection of her faith:

> My mom had gotten sick and I remember the Sunday prior to her dying, my mom died on a Tuesday, so that Sunday I went to the altar just begging more or less I want my mom, I hope my mom will get better and then my mother died. And the people in church were like 'be careful what you pray for.' So, it was like putting that all together it was like I can't come back here. If I'm going to ask for my mother to be better or to not be sick and then she dies and the people in church say 'but that's what you asked for,' it was like 'no.' That is not what I asked for at all, or it is not what I meant. That led to me not going back to church. I think I went back one more time that semester because some of my sorority sisters were back at school and they were kind of like keep doing what you had been doing, so I went to church and I just broke down crying, it was just too much for me, I can't really be here. I want to say I didn't go back after that semester and I was still

in school there for another year and a half.

It seems significant that of the 10 participants, only one expressed crisis of faith connected to the intersection of his sexual orientation and spiritual development, although two participants experienced spiritual struggle connected to profound personal/family tragedies.

Personal faith practices. This code was defined as personal religious practices, such as prayer, scripture reading, or attending church, that may be shared in a community setting or done alone, and included the sub-codes *campus* and *community*. This code was described by 10 participants. For example, P007 stated his community faith practices included "... weekly prayer services, communion, things like that nothing out of the ordinary." P010 described her campus personal faith practices this way:

> I think that's where I also developed that prayer, so remembering to, more so the prayer before you go to bed before I went to college and then afterwards you have that realization of 'oh, prayer can happen any time and it's not just based in that time.' But, definitely, I would say that would be a practice- of prayer and then for holidays. Associating the holidays with religion and for Christmas or for Easter. Going to these specific church occasions to celebrate and commemorate different holidays.

P005 offered this view on her personal faith practices and the importance they held in her life:

> I think the whole concept of mindfulness is the greatest aspect of Buddhism that I have incorporated into my daily practices. I would say this definitely has ties to my sexual identity development- without mindfulness and journaling on a daily

> basis, I don't know if I could get on with life...being mindful and reflecting on all of my experiences helps me to make sense of who I am and how all my separate identities work together.

Public faith duties. This code was defined as public religious duties or roles, such as choir director, playing music, leading a service, or performing some other official ministry activity, and included the sub-codes *campus* and *community*. In discussion with the auditor, this code was seen as a distinct code from personal faith practices as unique factors not connected to spirituality, such as interest in leadership or other motivations, may encourage participants to engage in public faith duties versus personal faith practices. Accordingly, these codes, although related, were not compressed further. Eight participants discussed engaging in public faith duties.

P007 explained his community public faith duties the following way: "I was an usher in church, I was in the youth choir, and also played music in church as well." P009 described her community public faith duties:

> Prior to entering college I was Baptist. I was a musician, so I was super involved in gospel choir, I was super involved, so I was in church Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday, and then sometimes Thursdays we were there until 10 o'clock at night. You know, stayed late for church and all those different things. So, I was super active in the church.

Spiritual/religious congruence. This code, described by five participants, was defined as the level of fit an individual feels within a particular religious/spiritual group, organization, or denomination. It included the sub-codes *low*, *medium*, and *high*. P001 described high spiritual/religious congruence in a conservative Black Baptist

denomination in southeastern Virginia that is not officially accepting of LGBQQ individuals, by stating:

> I love the Baptist faith. I love my Baptist upbringing and I love my Baptist church, you know, and I realize that I'm dealing with human beings, even when I'm dealing with the Baptists, I'm dealing with a human being, and so, they aren't God and they don't have a heaven or a hell to put me in, and so I'm going to be there and serve God to the best of my ability. Until he sees fit to move me elsewhere.

For some individuals finding congruence was a process; P002 described finding his spiritual/religious congruence in his post-college life through trial and error:

> Now, I am in a United Church of Christ [church], okay, it is open and affirming towards gay and lesbians, most of them are, not all of them, uh, and how I ended up there was as part of my seminary experience. We had to do an internship and of the churches that I sought out, one was a Baptist church who told me, uh, when you are no longer gay we can let you do it. [Another church] told me, well, you can help serve but you can't participate in leadership because you are gay, and I think out of sheer frustration one day I was looking online trying to find something, and found a United Church of Christ out in [coastal Virginia city] and went there and basically got embraced by the pastor and this, you know it's okay, and I stayed there and I was able to be a ministry intern there.

P002 further described a medium level of congruence in his new church, which he attended with his partner, "... it was still the melding of Christian viewpoints because now I'm in a liturgical liberal church, from a basically independent, hardcore

fundamental church with a spiritualist background…"

Spiritual seeking. This code was defined as personal exploration for a new spiritual/religious identity and/or community and included the sub-codes *active* and *inactive*. Four participants described this code. For example, P010 described her inactive process of spiritual seeking in the following way:

> And again, it would be every year I would start a new journal and be like 'alright, now I'm going to start reading my bible again,' and then there'd be a point where I'd drifted off, but every year I felt that kind of distance, which I didn't like with my spirituality but I hadn't quite figured out how to bring things together.

She further explained that her spiritual seeking process consisted of personal reflection and research without taking any active steps towards joining a new spiritual group or faith that fits her:

> So, right now, I still consider myself to be Christian, and Baptist Christian, but I haven't really been to church in awhile. I haven't found one here. So that, the actual religious practice of going to church and that type of thing, I don't do, but in my own life, I still do my prayer, meditation, still listening to gospel music and still looking at, you know, different things but it is not as hard core- every morning we are waking up and doing Bible reading or that type of thing. So, one of things I have been thinking about over the last year is really figuring out a way to reconnect. So, I met a pastor at a conference that I went to, a diversity conference- Creating Change, and he's actually a gay pastor and so he was getting me some different things to read, books to read, to help make that connection back again.

Sexual Orientation Factors

This structural theme described college experiences related most directly to sexual orientation factors in the participants' lives. Textural codes connected to this structural theme were *sexual orientation*, *sexual orientation acceptance*, *sexual orientation rejection*, *discrimination concerns*, *outness level*, *early awareness of orientation*, *LGBQQ mentorship*, and *coming out as sacrament*.

Sexual orientation. This code, discussed by 10 participants, was defined as participant stated LGBQQ sexual orientation and included the sub-codes *pre-college*, *college*, and *present*. Talking about both his pre-college and college sexual orientation as a gay man, P001 stated "I came to college always having an inkling that I liked guys. I didn't actually admit it until my sophomore year...and my first sexual experience ever, you know with a guy..." happened at college. After coming out publically at college during his sophomore year he said "I was the quintessential gay on campus [and] I was the president of our LGBQQ organization for two years."

Sexual orientation acceptance. Related to the code above, this code was defined as the discovery and acceptance process concerning sexual orientation on a spectrum (i.e., low, medium, high), that may involve questioning or doubt by self or others and included the sub-codes *self*, *family*, and *peers*. This concept, discussed by nine participants, is connected to the coming out experience for some individuals, but may not involve public outness. In consultation with the auditor, this code and the corresponding sexual orientation rejection code, listed below, were seen as distinct processes from each other, with potentially different contributing factors and were not compressed accordingly into one code. P006 described his sexual orientation acceptance as a self-process while

working with a therapist:

> And eventually I did see somebody and they kind of helped me gain a self-awareness to even realize that I even had those feelings [of being gay]. At the same time, I was still going to church so and that, that took like a year. This process was not slow. A year or year and a half.

In another example, P006 further discussed his self-process of accepting his sexual orientation gradually:

> During the time I considered myself, well, as I said I started out straight [in college], for a little bit, I mean, I was in counseling, and he wasn't going to push something on me. I wanted to be, I mean, I found out I had these desires for men but I was going to be a non-acting homosexual. So, I considered myself that for a little bit, but it didn't work for me [laughs]. So, then I was bi[sexual] for a little bit, you know, and that was still based in some denial really. That was for a long time. And now, I call myself gay.

P005 described experiences with all three sub-codes of sexual orientation acceptance during college the following way:

> Um, well, it actually wasn't a terribly exciting experience. I struggled a lot in high school, but didn't know why and probably it was sexual identity development related, I just didn't know it then. And then my first kind of…I'm not even sure what spurred my interest. I made an online profile and decided I was interested in women and it just went from there [*self*]. I came out to my family and they were like, 'yeah, we've known for awhile [*family*]'. Came out to my friends. 'Yeah, we've known for awhile [*peers*]'. So, it was super easy. Never met any resistance

from anyone. Um, it was a really easy process.

Sexual orientation rejection. This code, described by five participants, was defined as the rejection process concerning sexual orientation on a spectrum (i.e., low, medium, high), that may involve questioning or doubt by self or others and included the sub-codes *self*, *family*, and *peers*. Individuals experiencing sexual orientation rejection may not achieve acceptance and/or may suppress their sexual orientation, potentially including participation in "ex-gay" practices.

P006 described how his family accepted his sexual orientation but he rejected it during college, "Yeah. I got lucky in that sense. The only person that really hated it the most was myself." For him, self-rejection led to dramatic spiritual struggle and mental health responses (e.g., cutting, substance abuse).

P003 offered an example of peer sexual orientation rejection in high school:

> I didn't have many friends up until college. I had some friends but…I, one day I remember, I have a friend now that I went to high school with, and we had this small falling out in high school because she was like 'yeah, I didn't like you because you acted so better than other people,' or something like that. I and was like, uh, ok. But, eventually we got to the bottom of it and some other stuff because I was like you are friends with all these other people that I don't understand why they don't like me? And they were like, oh, well, they think you are gay and they don't want you looking at them. And I was like, wow, that's interesting that you think I'm gay when I don't even know how I feel?

Another participant, P008, experienced family rejection by her mother during college. She said:

> Um, so, my mother is one of the people, that I, ah, I don't really tell her much, but one of the people that I did talk more to when I was in grade school or high school and stuff like that. Um, like I have friends obviously, but I would talk to my mom. And I told her and she was like 'oh. Why? This is not okay.' Once again, just turning on the religion, like, full force, so she was like 'no, this makes me sick' kind of thing. I was like 'okay. Alright. Well, that's frustrating that we can't be open anymore.' So, I'll keep it to myself and it's good.

Discrimination concerns. This code, described by five participants, was defined as behavior participants encountered that directly refuted, rejected, or harmed them due to their sexual orientation or caused fear of such behavior. When asked if he ever felt unwelcome on campus after coming out in college, P001 said "I mean, of course, you know, things happened...but I mean...someone wrote 'fucking faggot' on my [dorm] door but I know who did that stupid shit and he was an asshole, he is beneath the group right now..." indicating he did not let this overt discriminatory behavior upset him too much during college.

For others, discrimination led to significant emotional distress. P002 discussed discrimination concerns in a class at a conservative Christian college in southeastern Virginia:

> I was taking a Christian ethics class and they had a, definitely, inevitable homosexuality and Christianity discussion and the professor who was teaching that class was also one that I had come out to when I split up with my partner and I was trying to live, and the dialogue was so caustic, if you were looking at the discussion board, posts, and about anti-gay, anti-homosexual sentiment that I was

> literally walking around campus suicidal and, you know, I have been down that path.

P002's experience was so hurtful that he had a mental health response, but ultimately decided to come out in his class leading to open and positive dialogue. As the result of this event, P002 began "being authentic about who I was," in turn convincing other students to be authentic, resulting in a reconciliation and level of acceptance with his fellow students.

Outness level. This code was defined as the level of public openness individuals had concerning sexual orientation and included the sub-codes *low*, *medium*, and *high*. Seven participants discussed outness level in their interviews. For example, P003 described her present outness level in the medium range, connected to her perception of family sexual orientation rejection:

> I have some close friends and family that know, but I don't have any desire to tell any of my extended family, especially any of my mother's family, about it, which has really pushed me further away from them since she died because I know I can't really be what they, well, I don't feel like I am being what they want me to be. Which is like this good Christian girl? I don't know in their eyes what that is- I know I'm not that.

P010 described a very low level of outness on campus, even though she had begun self-acceptance for her sexual orientation in high school:

> So, it was one of those things where I was very open and had friends that were gay and had friends that were involved in [LGBQQ] organizations, but I, myself, was like 'oh, yeah, I'm straight,' even though since I was younger I've always

> been attracted to both men and women. It was one of those things like, I don't know, you are attracted to both but you are only supposed to be with men. So, during college I probably would have said 'oh, I'm just straight.'

Early awareness of orientation. This code, discussed by three participants, was defined as having an awareness of sexual orientation at a young age, in some cases prior to puberty. Early awareness of orientation may be connected to sexual orientation acceptance and/or rejection and outness level for individuals. P007 stated about his early awareness:

> Honestly, I knew that I was gay my entire life. I didn't really have a...[epiphany] I don't really know when it was so, I didn't really think I actually had a name for it until like middle school, but like when I was in elementary school, I just knew that I was attracted to other males, other men.

LGBQQ mentorship. This code was defined as formal mentorship by an out LGBQQ professional (e.g., teacher, supervisor). Two participants specifically discussed mentoring by LGBQQ professionals as instrumental in their personal acceptance of their sexual orientation during college. For P007, who was a member of a Black fraternity at his college in western Virginia, mentorship was essential for him to overcome his perceptions of his fraternity as a masculine-dominated culture that would not accept him as a gay man. He stated:

> But, I had my first summer internship at [a university in western Washington state], and my mentor and my supervisor- he was a Black, gay man, he is a pastor of a church and he is like a dean of students, so being able to have someone who is both gay, Black, and Christian in a professional field that I want to go into, like

> that summer, it was really, very influential for me to see someone who looks like me and also identifies as being gay, that was very impactful for me, just being able to have conversations with him, and that was a very powerful summer for me because I felt like that was the first time in my life that someone fully understood me and I really didn't have to explain myself because he pretty much knew already. So that was pretty great for me and I think that after that experience of my junior year, going into my senior year I think it was when I came out to all my fraternity brothers of my chapter, because I was the president that year, so just being able to be more comfortable with my chapter brothers and also I started coming out to more of my friends too.

For P007, having an LGBQQ mentor provided him with a role model for how to be a gay, Black man and encouraged him to become open about his sexual orientation in his fraternity and on campus, openness that was received with "hugs" and acceptance from his fraternity brothers.

For P005, who expressed ambivalence towards publically identifying as a lesbian during her undergraduate experience, she received mentoring that encouraged her to be more out in graduate school, demonstrating mentorship is important across academic levels. She stated:

> I would say, after, well, during my master's program. One of my professors was very out and very proud and really loved the work he was doing and the things he was doing, so I started to really embrace that, and I think that that kind of informed my decisions and dissertation topics and research topics and things like that.

Coming out as sacrament. This code was defined as the coming out process as an enlightening spiritual experience or leading to such a spiritually transcendent experience. This code was only experienced by one participant. P006 stated:

> I know coming out like, in a way like, see the way I see it now, coming out was like a, there's no better way to say it, was like a sacrament. I've heard that used before and, it that's inspiring 'cause I agree with it! It is kind of a sacrament. And for me, it was, it was almost a gaining [of] a cultural connection to God. So, being able to come out to them [my family] made me closer to them and in that sense made me feel closer to God because I was able to express the way that I believed in creation- the way I was created- like this is the way I was created, you know, and I was able to show that, to share that, with other people he created.

College Factors

This structural theme described factors most directly connected to experiences participants had unique to being within a college environment. Textural codes connected to this structural theme were *college success*, *extracurricular college campus cultural activity*, *academic activity*, *freedom and independence*, *racial/ethnic college influence*, *interfaith campus diversity and ministry*, and *Safe Zone training*.

College success. This code was defined as high achievement, recognition and enjoyment of college. Except for one, to some degree college success was described in each interview (n= 9), such as P009's simple exclamation "Oh yeah! It was probably the most positive college experience I have had so far." P005 said "things were great in college. I was involved in everything. I was president of every possible club I could be president of. Yeah. Super involved. Did my own research. And just, yeah, it was good."

P002 experienced success in college even after coming out publically at a very conservative Christian college that did not officially condone LGBQQ people and went on to be awarded academic recognition as an outstanding student. Such high college success may have contributed to smoother integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development during college.

Extracurricular campus cultural activity. This code was defined as informal participation in extracurricular campus cultural activities beyond coursework. One participant indicated such experiences contributed to her spiritual development. P010 explained:

> I also took part in an African dance group during my four years, and I felt like it was also a reminder to me that spirituality is not just about, you know, going to a church, singing in a choir, and reading a Bible- it is that so many different cultures have so many different ways of being spiritual and I absolutely enjoyed that, being able to celebrate blessings and celebrate the things that were being given to us but also meditate through dance and through the African culture as well…it was nice to have that connection and I feel that sometimes I learn about other cultures that aren't so prescribed. It is really nice to say, again, that in your own being you can be spiritual.

Academic activity. This code, described by four participants, was defined as experiences related to college coursework. For P005, it was her academic studies that sparked a personal interest in spiritual development. She explained what during college, aside from sexual orientation, influenced her spirituality:

> That would be my philosophy major, for sure. Once I started taking classes I

started questioning absolutely everything. I practiced as a Christian, very loosely, I don't know that I was ever really sold on it but that's just what my family did so that's what I did. So, it wasn't until I got to college that I was like, you know what? I don't really know if God does exist. I just really started questioning things and philosophy does that to you- it makes you question absolutely everything, not just religion, so I would say that was the main push for my changes in my spirituality.

Freedom and independence. This code was defined as having the ability to explore new ideas (e.g., spiritual/religious, sexual, political) due to the freedom and independence of the college environment. This freedom and independence in college influenced spiritual development for four participants. P010 explained how college freedom led to reflection on spirituality:

Oh, let's see…I would say another [influence on spirituality] would be just, kind of, a lot of periods of self-reflection because there are these moments of freedom and I can do whatever I want and stay out [unheard word], but then, every year wondering am I doing things because I can do them or because this is what I really want to do.

P005 also saw the freedom and independence of the college environment as essential to her growth, sharing:

I mean, I had more freedom. I didn't have my parents telling me 'okay, it's Sunday morning, we have to go to church.' Yeah, I still lived at home, but I started having my own identity at that point. I was an adult and I was becoming an educated being and making my own decisions based upon the things that I

> wanted and liked and whatever. So, I'm sure that just my age and being in [the] college environment and all that kind of influenced [my spiritual development] as well.

Racial/ethnic college influence. This code was defined as recognition that racial/ethnic makeup and affiliation with racial/ethnic based groups during college had more influence upon a participant's identity than their sexual orientation, in some cases making conscious choices to emphasize race or ethnicity over sexual orientation during college. Two participants who were African American, one male and one female, discussed this experience. For example, P009 explained how her racial/ethnic heritage took precedence over sexual orientation during college:

> I think at that time, the school has changed a bit, but at that time everything was about race. And so, I wasn't trying to complicate the racial discussion with a sexuality discussion, because there was room to grow racially, right, because it wasn't a dynamic there. So, I think that that led me to be more active in terms of racial issues and less active in terms of gender and sexuality and all these issues. So, it wasn't as if I had to pick or choose, but there were things that I felt that I wanted to be more vocal about, as opposed to others, so I guess I did pick and choose actually.

Interfaith campus diversity and ministry. This code was defined as exposure to faith diversity through personal connections and interfaith ministry on campus. This code was unique to P010 although she attended the same private college in western Virginia as P009.

P010 explained the role interfaith ministry had in her life concerning exposing her

to a diversity of religious opinions:

> I think that, in many ways, I'm sure that was the beginning of me questioning why things are such strict and hard rules, because that was also when I was meeting people who had different religious values and so I was like 'well, why are they automatically going to go to hell, just because they don't believe the same thing I believe.' I know people who were raised Muslim from birth; well that's not their fault. There were a lot of questions that began during the college years, so I'm sure that as I met people, had friends, and then thought about the things that people were saying, oh this is right or this is wrong, it probably influenced that questioning of...but why does just one thing make someone an evil or bad person.

P010 further explained how her college's interfaith ministry promoted her spiritual development:

> I think, also, having a chaplaincy at the university that wasn't just for one denomination was also another thing that opened my mind up to saying there is not one way to be spiritual and that it is okay to explore your different spiritualities. Because I would attend the- they had like an intro to Buddhist meditation or something like that and I was like 'oh, wow, that sounds awesome I want to go' or going to the Hillel meeting and seeing that dinner celebration [Seder]. So for me it was very- I loved seeing other people celebrate their spirituality or their religion in whatever way they did.

Safe Zone training. This code was defined as influence of campus Safe Zone trainings (i.e., sexual orientation and gender acceptance) or related programs at a college. One participant briefly mentioned the influence of campus Safe Zone trainings in helping

her to develop language to describe her sexual orientation. Reflecting on the differences she saw in herself during college and current students who are out at college, P010 said:

> The students might not be at the personal growth level, you know when they get to freshman year, [but] at least there's some language they have, and I feel like if I were coming into college now- I think that when I came into college I didn't have the language that these kids have. I'm like, I didn't have it until I went through a Safe Zone training my senior year, you know? Versus they're coming in with all different types of...I mean it fascinates me.

She implied with a deeper understanding of language connected to sexual orientation prior to college she may have had a stronger sense of her own sexuality, language and sexuality growth she did not gain until after attending Safe Zone training.

Structural Theme Integration Framework

Results of this phenomenology highlighted a diverse range of experiences that influenced participants' intersecting sexual orientation and spiritual development during college. Some of these influential experiences, such as college success, extended beyond sexual orientation or spirituality but had significant meaning in the development of participants and/or took primary influence during college, such as racial/ethnic college identity. Some experiences were unique to individual participants but their level of influence was profound (e.g. death of a parent).

A potential framework for the manner in which sexual orientation and spiritual development interacts for participants regarding the structural themes is expressed in the qualitative results of this study. There appears to be a continuum of the degree of influence, from low to high, for sexual orientation factors and religious factors towards

integration, with college factors, supportive factors, and ontological factors as systems navigated by the participants. Within an individual, degree of integration may also occur on a continuum as it intersects with sexual orientation and religious factors, from low to high. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of this structural theme integration framework describing this potential integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development for individuals.

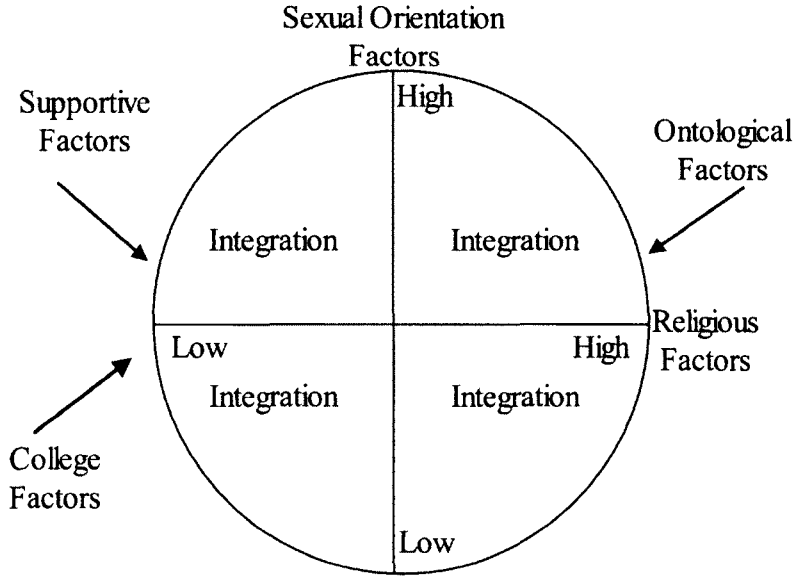

Figure 1. Structural Theme Integration Framework. This figure represents how integration and structural themes interact.

Quantitative Research Phase

Following completion of the qualitative research phase, the primary researcher developed an instrument from the final codebook and specific questions reflecting the literature. After expert review, this resulted in a 61 item instrument plus 17 demographic questions. The completed Sexual Orientation and Spirituality Integration Instrument (SSOII), examining factors contributing to sexual orientation and spiritual development and their intersection for current and former college students, was then distributed to

potential participants in December, 2014 and again in January, 2015 under the name "College Spirituality and Sexuality Experiences Survey" (see Appendix D). Items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5), with higher scores indicating greater influence of a particular factor or greater agreement with an identity development component. Results of the quantitative phase of this study addressed the following research questions:

3. What is the content validity evidence of the instrument for a sample of current and former college students who identify as LGBQQ?

4a. What are the initial factors associated with an instrument to measure the integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development for current and former college students as indicated by exploratory factor analysis?

4b. What is the internal consistency of the instrument for a sample of current and former college students who identify as LGBQQ?

4c. What is the criterion-related validity of the instrument as evidence by instrument total score and high integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development?

Content Validation

The first quantitative research question pertains to content validity. A 33 item draft instrument (plus 18 demographic questions), created by the primary researcher, was reviewed by five expert reviewers for content validity. In an attempt to make a user friendly instrument, the draft contained a mixture of Likert questions and check box questions. The experts reviewed each item for conceptual agreement with the purpose and research questions of the study, match to the final codebook, clarity of wording, coverage

of the literature, and overall survey design suggestions. Concerning content conceptualization, the reviewers determined that each item should utilize a Likert scale, rather than compressing some items into check boxes, as it was important to capture each code from phase 1 in the SSOII. Changes were made to create a 61 item instrument that reflected the final phase 1 codebook more fully. Where applicable, reviewer feedback was considered when rewording items and survey design for the finalized SSOII. Changes to items were also made regarding clarity and to demographic questions (two questions were compressed, one was added) based on reviewer's knowledge of the literature, resulting in 17 finalized demographic questions.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

To address the second research question, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was run to examine underlying factors to retain in a revised version of the SSOII. According to the rule of 150 (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999), with a sample of 171 participants this study was appropriate for EFA. To analyze the results of the EFA, a principle factor analysis with a promax rotation was used to examine the underlying factor structure of the original 61 item SSOII.

The primary researcher conducted a preliminary analysis of the output, investigating the *R*-matrix for retaining items with correlations between .30 and .90 and ensuring an acceptable determinant value (see Field, 2013). Of the 61 items, 38 were removed based on correlations that fell outside the acceptable range, resulting in 25 items. The primary researcher then conducted the EFA again and ensured the output contained items with an acceptable determinant value. Further, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < .001$), and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling

adequacy was acceptable (.88), indicating the data were appropriate for EFA. Communalities ranged from .40 to .77.

Extracted eigenvalues greater than 1 were retained as initial factors in the revised SSOII. Two factors were removed leaving 23 items. Of the initial five extractions, a three-factor solution appeared most interpretable for the remaining 23 items after EFA. The two removed factors accounted for only 5.2% of the variance, and these items were removed due to cross loading or for low total variance. Results showed the remaining three factors accounted for 55.53% of the total variance (Table 7).

Table 7
Rotated Factor Structure and Total Variance

	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Factor	Eigenvalue	%Variance	Cumulative%
1. Acceptance vs. Rejection	9.11	30.35	30.35
2. Interpersonal Supports & Groups	6.43	21.44	57.79
3. Self-Harm Outcomes	1.12	3.74	55.53

Using .30 as the factor loading criteria, 23 of the original items loaded on one of the three factors. Factor 1 (Acceptance vs. Rejection; eigenvalue = 9.11), containing 8 items, accounted for 30.35% of the total variance. These items represented experiences connected to acceptance or rejection of spiritual/religious identity or sexual orientation; a sample item is "A rejection of my faith due to my sexual orientation." Factor 2 (Interpersonal Supports and Groups; eigenvalue = 6.43), containing 7 items, accounted for 21.44% of the total variance. These items represented participation in groups or related interpersonal support factors for sexual orientation or spirituality; a sample item is "Participation in community spiritual/religious groups (e.g. off campus groups such as YMCA or Salvation Army)." Factor 3 (Self-Harm Outcomes; eigenvalue = 1.12), containing 8 items, accounted for 3.74% of the total variance. These items represented

negative self-harm (e.g., cutting, substance abuse) or mental health symptoms (e.g. depression, anxiety) due to spirituality or sexual orientation during college; a sample item is "Drug or alcohol abuse as a result of my sexual orientation."

SSOII Internal Consistency

The third research question related to internal consistency for the SSOII. Cronbach's alphas for the original 61 item instrument were acceptable for the total scale (.88) and for each subgroup of participants (LGBQQ = .88; heterosexual = .89). Following EFA, Cronbach's alpha for the revised 23 item instrument was acceptable at .84. With the exception of 3 items, corrected item-total correlations ranged from .23 to .66, with a mean corrected item-total correlation of .42 (Table 8). Cronbach's alphas for the revised SSOII by factors (subscales) were as follows: Acceptance vs. Rejection (.64), Interpersonal Supports and Groups (.89), and Self-Harm Outcomes (.84). For the total scale by subgroups following EFA, Cronbach's alphas were acceptable (LGBQQ = .88; heterosexual = .82). Furthermore, Cronbach's alphas for individual factors by subgroups following EFA were: Acceptance vs. Rejection (LGBQQ = .63; heterosexual = .58), Interpersonal Supports and Groups (LGBQQ = .88; heterosexual = .88), Self-Harm Outcomes (LGBQQ = .89; heterosexual = .89).

Table 8
Rotated Factor Structure, Item-Total Correlations, Communalities, and Item Means and Standard Deviations

Factor/Item	1	2	3	*r*	h^2	*M*	*SD*
	Factor 1: Acceptance vs. Rejection						
23. Seeking out new relationships accepting of my sexual orientation.	**.96**	-.07	-.12	.34	.71	2.66	1.42
33. Discrimination based on my sexual orientation.	**.89**	-.03	.04	.48	.69	2.22	1.45
22. Less participation in my faith community as I accepted my sexual orientation more.	**.87**	-.08	-.08	.50	.73	2.32	1.40
9. Spiritual struggle(s) due to my sexual orientation.	**.81**	.10	.02	.63	.73	2.15	1.39

21.	A rejection of my faith due to my sexual orientation.	**.73**	-.11	.10	.55	.77	2.04	1.22
48.	My spiritual or religious community accepted my sexual orientation.	**-.70**	.00	.09	-.38	.62	3.43	1.40
27.	A rejection of my sexual orientation as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.	**.60**	.30	.02	.59	.52	1.83	1.19
53.	My family accepted my spiritual or religious identity.	**-.31**	.04	.09	.07	.40	3.90	1.08
	Factor 2: Interpersonal Supports and Groups							
46.	Participation in campus extracurricular spiritual/religious groups (e.g., Muslim Student Association, Hillel, Young Life).	.01	**.87**	.01	.42	.59	2.30	1.38
60.	Support from my spiritual/religious administrators and leaders (e.g., within programming, through official sponsorship of activities or groups).	-.15	**.71**	.02	.23	.54	2.99	1.24
49.	Participation in official campus church or religious services (i.e., attended campus chapel, temple, mosque, or synagogue sponsored officially by college).	.10	**.70**	-.03	.49	.55	2.57	1.50
56.	Participation in community spiritual/religious groups (e.g., off campus groups such as YMCA or Salvation Army).	.00	**.68**	.06	.36	.42	2.41	1.31
31.	Participation in public spiritual/religious practices (e.g., formal role(s) as choir director, playing music, teaching, preaching, or other leadership functions).	.05	**.67**	.03	.47	.67	2.65	1.58
52.	Participation in community (off campus) church or religious services (i.e., attended a community chapel, temple, mosque, or synagogue).	.08	**.58**	-.14	.39	.67	3.08	1.55
5.	Sense of belonging within my spiritual or religious community/group.	-.14	**.37**	-.06	.11	.68	3.16	1.29
	Factor 3: Self-Harm Outcomes							
35.	Mental health symptoms (e.g., depression, anxiety) as a result of my sexual orientation.	.55	.00	**.37**	.58	.67	2.12	1.28
32.	Self-harm behaviors (e.g., cutting, burning) as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.	-.22	-.02	**.98**	.52	.74	1.34	.69
43.	Self-harm behaviors (e.g., cutting, burning) as a result of my sexual	.06	.09	**.81**	.55	.69	1.42	.90

	orientation.						
39.	Drug or alcohol abuse as a result of my sexual orientation.	.14	-.03	**.63**	.50	.57	1.59	.99
37.	Suicidal thoughts or actions as a result of my sexual orientation.	.37	-.01	**.61**	.61	.70	1.68	1.11
30.	Drug or alcohol abuse as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.	.04	-.04	**.55**	.48	.57	1.52	.86
28.	Suicidal thoughts or actions as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.	.30	-.07	**.52**	.66	.73	1.65	1.00
26.	Mental health symptoms (e.g., depression, anxiety) as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.	.24	.04	**.31**	.55	.57	2.15	1.30

SSOII Criterion-Related Validity

To address the fourth research question concerning the SSOII's criterion-related validity, the primary researcher investigated the link between the total scale of the 23 item SSOII with several factors including sexual orientation, age of awareness, timing of outness, outness to spiritual or religious group during college, and spiritual struggle. Specifically, the primary researcher conducted a series of ANCOVAs and correlations to examine the associations between integration of sexual orientation and spirituality with several demographic variables, controlling for participant age.

Sexual orientation and age of awareness. The primary researcher conducted an ANCOVA to examine the relationship between age of awareness, sexual orientation, and total SSOII score, controlling for participant age. Levene's statistic was significant (F= 1.961 [40, 105], p=.003); however, Field (2013) states the ANCOVA is a robust enough test to overcome this violation of assumptions. There was not a significant interaction effect for the variables (F= .679, p= .79, partial η^2= .08, P= .40). Results indicated, however, there was a main effect between sexual orientation and the total SSOII score (F= 12.830 [1, 104], p=. 001, partial η^2= .11, P= 94).

Timing of outness. A second ANCOVA was conducted to explore the association between timing of outness and total SSOII score, controlling for participant age. Levene's statistic was non-significant (F= .299 [1, 158], p= .59). There was not a significant relationship between timing of outness and total SSOII score (F= .182 [1, 158], *p*= .67, P= .07, partial η^2= .001). Thus, when a participant came out about their sexual orientation (i.e., before, during, after college, or never) did not indicate differences in degree of sexual orientation and spirituality integration.

For the LGBQQ sub-set, timing of outness was also not significant (F= .001 [1, 75], *p*= .972, P= .05, partial η^2< .001). In addition, Levene's test was not significant (F= .015 [1, 75], *p*= .904). When examining three LGBQQ sub-groups (i.e., outness before college, before and during college, or after college and never), there was not a significant relationship between the total SSOII score and participants who came out before college (F= .527 [2, 74], *p*= .769, partial η^2= .007, P= .09). Levene's test was not significant (F= .009 [2, 74], *p*= .991).

Outness to spiritual/religious group. The relationship between participants reporting their sexual orientation to their spiritual/religious groups during college and the degree of integration of sexual orientation and spirituality (i.e., total SSOII score) was not significant for the total sample (F= .433[1, 75], *p*= .512, partial η^2= .006, P= .10), when controlling for participant age. Levene's statistic was not significant (F= .047 [1, 75], *p*= .830). When looking at the LGBQQ subset (*M*= .29, *SD*= .46), there was not a significant relationship between the total SSOII score and outness to spiritual/religious group (F= 10.032 [6, 145], *p*= .132, P= .623, partial η^2= .065). Levene's test was not significant (F= 2.866 [14, 145], *p*= .001).

Spiritual struggle. The primary researcher also conducted a series of correlations to examine the degree of agreement that spiritual struggle was present due to spiritual/religious identity and sexual orientation, the amount of religious participation in formal and informal activities, and the degree of integration of sexual orientation and spirituality (total SSOII score). Means for items relating to spiritual struggle were as follows: spiritual struggle due to sexual orientation (M= 2.15, SD= 1.39), spiritual struggle due to spiritual or religious identity (M= 2.93, SD= 1.30). The mean religious participation for the total sample was 6.33 (SD= 2.54).

There was not a significant association between amount of religious participation and spiritual struggle due to spiritual/religious identity (r= .06, p= .43) or spiritual struggle due to sexual orientation (r= .10, p= .19). There was a significant relationship between amount of religious participation and the total SSOII score (r= .56, p< .01), with a moderate effect size (η^2= .31). There was also a significant relationship between spiritual struggle due to spiritual or religious identity (r= .36, p< .01) and total scale, with a small effect size (η^2= .13), and for spiritual struggle due to sexual orientation (r= .69, p< .01) and total scale, with a moderate effect size (η^2= .48).

Summary

Results from of this study showed a complex interaction of influences upon spiritual development connected to sexual orientation and other issues that impact college students. Issues such as spiritual struggle, acceptance vs. rejection factors, the influence of interpersonal supports, and mental health outcomes connected to sexual orientation were relevant within both the qualitative and quantitative phases. Also, results indicated the degree of integration of spirituality and sexual orientation can be conceived on a

continuum with other factors (i.e., college, ontological, interpersonal supportive) as systems individuals must navigate during their integration process. Depending on the influence of certain factors, such as spiritual struggle or mental health responses, the degree of integration of spirituality and sexual orientation may shift on the continuum.

Qualitatively, several results deserve highlighting due to perceived impact upon the development of participants during college. These results included LGBQQ mentorship, the influence of ethnicity and/or racial identity over sexual orientation, the concept of coming out as a sacrament, and the potential influence of having a spiritual or religious upbringing.

Quantitatively, content validity, factor analysis, and internal consistency showed useful results for examining the SSOII. However, for criterion-related validity, particular factors such as age of awareness, timing of outness, and outness to spiritual or religious groups during college were not significant, although there was some support for criterion-related validity when looking at spiritual struggle items.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to (a) qualitatively explore the lived experiences of LGBQQ former college students concerning how their sexual orientation influenced, if at all, their spiritual development during college; and (b) create an instrument to quantitatively assess the qualitative results within a larger population. A primary goal of this study was to expand the literature on this topic and advocate for more inclusion of the voices of LGBQQ people in studies concerning the spiritual development of college students. The study investigated whether the textural and structural themes described in the qualitative portion were present in the experiences of other LGBQQ college students on a larger scale. Thus, the qualitative phase of this study informed the creation and distribution of an instrument. Suggestions are offered to college counseling and student affairs professionals to promote the integration of spirituality and sexual orientation among LGBQQ college students.

For the first phase of the study, the primary researcher identified five structural themes and 34 textural codes. For the second phase, the researcher developed a 61 item instrument from these themes and codes, as well as from previous literature on spiritual and sexual orientation. This instrument, the SSOII, was then initially validated in terms of content validity, exploratory factor analysis, internal consistency, and criterion-related validity. This chapter will interpret these results and compare them to previous literature. Additionally, potential implications of this study will be discussed for college counselors and for student affairs professionals. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of study limitations and future research directions.

Qualitative Research Phase

Numerous studies have identified a complex interaction of factors related to the development of college students, such as personality and identity issues, campus environment, career dilemmas, and negative emotional states such as depression or anxiety (Fisler et al., 2009; Moran, 2009; Ritchie et al., 2013; Torres et al., 2009). Similarly, complex developmental interactions were evident for the sample of LGBQQ individuals within this study at the intersection of sexual orientation and spirituality. Five structural themes (i.e., supportive factors, ontological factors, religious factors, sexual factors, and college factors) described those complex developmental interactions expressed by participants. Connecting to these structural themes, certain complex interactional factors stand out; such factors included the following (a) spiritual struggle connected to parental loss or sexual orientation; (b) severe mental health responses; (c) interpersonal support and college factors; (d) LGBQQ mentorship; (e) influence of racial/ethnic identity; and (f) the concept of coming out as sacrament.

Spiritual Struggle

Spiritual struggle (i.e., crisis of faith) as documented by numerous scholars (Bryant, 2011; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Fisler et al., 2009; Small & Bowman, 2011), has been closely connected to the overall college experience for many students. Although they did not specifically look at LGBQQ individuals, Bryant and Astin (2008) concluded that spiritual struggle was significantly higher within marginalized populations of college students, including those with diverse ethnicities and those who have experienced discrimination in life (e.g., due to racial, gender, religious, or other diversity characteristics). Although there was some ethnic diversity within the current sample

(three White/European American, seven African American), no participants indicated spiritual struggle connected to racial/ethnic identity. Five participants did discuss discrimination or fears of discrimination due to their LGBQQ sexual orientation, but did not indicate spiritual struggle connected to these experiences.

Bryant and Astin (2008) also found higher rates of spiritual struggle among female college students, indicating that females with multiple diversity identifiers (e.g., sexual orientation, race/ethnicity) were at even higher risks for spiritual struggle; however, results of this study did not demonstrate this link. Although the current sample was split evenly regarding biological sex (five men, five women), only three participants indicated a spiritual struggle (one female, two male). Yet, the female African American participant experiencing spiritual struggle did not list her race/ethnicity, sex, or sexual orientation as connected to her college spiritual struggle. Within the current sample, spiritual struggle, noted by the three participants, did not seem connected to discrimination, sex, or racial/ethnic identity.

Although much research on diversity interactions with spirituality has overlooked sexual orientation and focused on other diversity characteristics (Bryant, 2011; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Fisler et al., 2009; Small & Bowman, 2011), some researchers (LePeau, 2007; Love et al., 2005; Rockenbach et al., 2012) have examined the connection of spiritual struggle to sexual orientation for college students. For example, in two qualitative studies, Rockenbach et al. (2012) and Love et al. (2005), concluded that spiritual struggle was somewhat inevitable as a byproduct of spiritual development for the LGBQQ college populations of their studies (4 LGBQQ of 10 students, 12 LGBQQ of 12 students, respectively). Within the current study, however, the connection between

spiritual struggle and sexual orientation was evident for only one participant (P006), who described his process of attempting to resolve his struggle through a "dark spirituality" (i.e., being prayed over, attributing his sexual orientation to demonic influence). Ultimately, his spiritual struggle led him to reject his conservative Christian faith and accept his sexual orientation. For this participant, spiritual struggle was reportedly profound and included severe mental health symptoms (e.g., depression, anxiety, self-harm, substance abuse).

The other two participants in this study that discussed spiritual struggle in their life experienced this struggle connected to a parental death. P004 resolved his temporary spiritual doubt and returned to his strong Christian faith with a more nuanced view (i.e., acceptance of God's bigger plan), but P003's struggle within her spiritual community led to rejection of her faith altogether. In P003's case, the negative responses of her religious community to her pleas for her mother's life through prayer (i.e., being told she prayed for the wrong thing) heightened her spiritual struggle and rejection. Spiritual struggle connected to personal tragedy or loss of a significant other was not reflected within the literature reviewed in this study pertaining to LGBQQ college students and is an important clinical issue to highlight.

The remaining participants in this study did not indicate spiritual struggle was a component of their spiritual development as discussed in previous literature for LGBQQ college students (Love et al., 2005; Rockenbach et al., 2012). Seven participants in this study overwhelmingly described changes within their spiritual development as gradual (i.e., struggle free) and disconnected from, or only minimally connected to, sexual orientation. Instead, they discussed spiritual shifts as having more to do with other

campus influences (e.g., academic coursework, exposure to faith diversity) than sexual orientation or connected to longstanding questioning spiritual or religious identities. For these participants, their spiritual growth transformed coincidentally to their sexual orientation during college and may reportedly have had as much to do with the independence and knowledge exposure of college (e.g., philosophy major) or the natural progression of a questioning search than to their sexual orientation. For example, one participant (P007) recalled as a child "I always really questioned religion in general," despite growing up within a home dedicated to Christian faith. While he recognized early awareness of his sexual orientation played a part in what questions he asked, it was his questioning nature that had a more profound influence on his shifts away from spirituality. The experience of participants in this study indicated that spiritual struggle, while still present for some individuals and deserving attention from counseling professionals, is not a given when sexual orientation and spirituality intersect or may be more related to other factors beyond sexual orientation.

Mental Health Responses

Previous literature has indicated that college students, and specifically LGBQQ college students, have distinct developmental concerns requiring special attention by college professionals (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Blau & Snell, 2013; Jenney, 2012; Scott et al., 2011; Stevens, 2004; Taliaferro et al. 2009; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012). In addition to concerns connected to career, relationship, identity, and existential development, the LGBQQ population requires particular attention to psychological health and emotional regulation needs (Jenney, 2012; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012). College counselors and student affairs professionals

exploring spiritual development must attend to student psychological health in particular, as poor navigation of these issues has been linked to high college dropout rates (Blau & Snell, 2013), among other outcomes, and spirituality has been positively linked to healthy college student development (Hartely, 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007). Additionally, recent literature has directly linked addictive coping behaviors to spiritual struggle in college freshman (Faigin et al., 2014).

For the current study, four participants reported clinically significant mental health responses. For example, P006 engaged in substance abuse and cutting behaviors in conjunction with severe anxiety and depression connected to the acceptance of his sexual orientation and his resulting spiritual struggle. At the influence of concerned peers, he was able to address and resolve these issues through counseling, but rejected his faith in the process. Another participant expressed a negative mental health response due to discrimination he experienced within a class at his conservative Christian college. His negative response was so severe he reported "walking around campus suicidal," a state he experienced earlier in his life when he was struggling with addictions issues.

The presence of severe psychological health issues within these participants supports concerns raised in the literature (Jenney, 2012; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012) for some LGBQQ college students. Research from the past 25 years, however, has demonstrated improved psychological health for individuals with a positive sexual orientation identity (Golub et al., 2012; Leserman et al., 1994; King & Smith, 2004; Miranda & Storms, 1989; Rosario et al., 2011) and for those with a positive spiritual identity (Faull & Hills, 2006; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2010; Nichols & Hunt, 2011). Other researchers have specifically identified spiritual development as a

major contributor to holistic health (Holmes et al., 2004; Kocet et al., 2011; Rodriguez & Follins, 2012). These scholars indicated spirituality is an important tool to assist many college students coping with difficult behavioral health symptoms, whether they are connected to sexual orientation or other influencing factors.

Interpersonal Support and College Factors

College students face unique developmental needs (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Blau & Snell, 2013; Jenney, 2012; Scott et al., 2011; Stevens, 2004; Taliaferro et al. 2009; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012), and these needs may be addressed through improvements in campus climate such as targeted supports for LGBQQ student development and spirituality resources (Jenney, 2012; Stevens, 2004). Several participants in this study explained the importance of interpersonal supports from campus groups, peers, and administrative staff in helping them with their overall development during college, including embracing their identities as spiritually active LGBQQ individuals. For example, P001 discussed multiple interactions with college faculty and staff that accepted and openly supported his endeavors as both director of his campus gospel choir and president of the campus LGBQQ organization. Further demonstrating commitment to a supportive campus climate for LGBQQ students, the official campus chapel at his school celebrated same sex unions openly. Other participants recognized the importance of engagement with accepting campus peers and active participation in groups on or off campus (e.g., Greek letter organizations) as providing needed interpersonal support during their college experience.

Related to interpersonal supports, many participants described other aspects of their college experience that positively contributed to their development as LGBQQ

individuals and/or their spiritual development. For example, one participant discussed participation in campus Safe Zone training (i.e., campus sexual orientation and gender acceptance programming) as providing her with the language to describe her sexual orientation development as a queer individual. This same participant benefitted from multiple interfaith programming opportunities that connected her to diverse faith perspectives through the office of the interfaith chaplain on her campus. Other official campus activities (e.g., African dance group), combined with these interfaith and LGBQQ accepting programs, helped her to explore her spirituality and sexual orientation in new ways during college. Additionally, several participants identified the independence to explore new ideas during college and participation in what they referred to as eye-opening coursework (e.g., philosophy) as instrumental in helping them develop their sexuality and/or spirituality. Although not all of the beneficial interpersonal supports or college factors discussed by participants were directly connected to spiritual development or sexual orientation, it could be argued that strong involvement with campus-related interpersonal supports may mitigate developmental difficulties (Blau & Snell, 2013; Jenney, 2012; Stevens, 2004), including those connected to spirituality, sexuality, or other psychological health difficulties for college students.

LGBQQ Mentorship

The potentially positive influence of mentorship by healthy LGBQQ adults for the development of college students seems strongly connected to the interpersonal supports and college factors discussed above. With over 400 colleges nationally providing specific resources to LGBQQ college students (Campus Pride, 2014) and over 500 members of the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals (2013) working

across the United States, there appears to be great potential to develop LGBQQ mentorship opportunities both on and off campus for students.

By example, two participants from the current study highlighted how such mentorship experiences by adult professionals who were out about their sexual orientation and integrated their sexuality into professional domains served as important guides for them to integrate their own identities. For P005, as the result of mentorship from a "very out and very proud" LGBQQ graduate school professor, she connected to her lesbian sexual orientation within her research and dissertation topics. Had this experience happened in her undergrad it is possible the identity integration process would have begun sooner. For P007, mentorship by an out gay, Christian student affairs professional who shared his ethnicity had a profound effect upon his sexual orientation and professional identity development. Such integrated professionals would be strong role models for any student, LGBQQ or otherwise, to follow.

Several researchers have demonstrated the importance of having visible LGBQQ faculty and staff mentors on college campuses as well as the inclusion of Safe Zone trainings for healthy development of students (Bryant, 2011; Gold & Stewart, 2011; Stevens, 2004). Extending the potential for mentorship by LGBQQ adults into the community via internships or related professional activities, as well as to campus and community spiritual/religious supports, would further assist LGBQQ college students through healthy development and integration of sexual orientation and spirituality.

Racial/Ethnic Identity Influence

As noted in the literature, LGBQQ college students must navigate multiple complex identity domains including gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religion

(Abes & Kasch, 2007; Scott et al., 2011; Stevens, 2004). In some instances, one or more of these domains may be more salient for individual student development. For example, two participants within this study made decisions regarding racial or ethnic identity taking precedence in their life during college over sexual orientation or spirituality.

While acknowledging that the culture of her college may have shifted since she graduated, P009 stated when she was in college "everything was about race. And so, I wasn't trying to complicate the racial discussion with a sexuality discussion, because there was room to grow racially." As a result of this racial emphasis she was led "...to be more active in terms of racial issues and less active in terms of gender and sexuality and all these [other] issues" like spirituality.

Another participant (P007) recognized the strong influence of racial/ethnic identity as a gay, Black man on his campus over any "dissonance" he may have felt between spirituality and sexuality. He stated "my racial identity is most salient so I think that...for me my racial identity definitely had more of an impact [at college]" and "...my spirituality definitely has an impact but I think my race also has a bigger impact too on my sexual orientation and my sexual identity." Both of these African American participants attended predominantly white institutions; however, it is not certain from the interviews if this impacted their experiences.

Spirituality has been found to be beneficial in cultivating a healthy lifestyle for many ethnically diverse adult clients (Boyd-Franklin, 2010; Holt et al., 2014) as well as diverse college student populations (Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis et al., 2004; Hartley, 2004; Lindholm, 2007; Rockenbach et al., 2012). Thus, there are implications for recognizing that some students may choose to prioritize racial/ethnic identity over other

identity domains (e.g. sexual orientation, spirituality, gender identity) within overall student development.

Coming Out as Sacrament

Literature concerning LGBQQ college students has historically linked the coming out process to the college phase of life and indicated it to be a potentially difficult and complex experience (Rhoads, 1997a, 1997b). Additionally, some scholars have directly linked the coming out process for college students to spirituality (Gold, 2011; Gold & Stewart, 2011). Although only one participant (P006) in the current study specifically situated his college coming out process within a spiritual context, he indicated it was a deeply profound and spiritually enlightening experience. He considered his coming out experience as "like a sacrament" that connected him deeper to God and to his family and indicated he had knowledge of other individuals who experienced a similarly sacramental coming out experience.

Sacraments can be loosely defined as external signs or rituals of God's internal presence in human life or visible acts that signal the existence of invisible spiritual realities (Harakas, 2001). For many people, sacramental acts are deeply comforting and connecting spiritual experiences (Harakas, 2001). Viewing the coming out process as a sacrament implies a heightened complex (Rhoads, 1997a, 1997b) and spiritual nature (Gold, 2011; Gold & Stewart, 2011) to the coming out process. Based upon a review of literature, no research studies were located on this unique experience making it difficult to make treatment recommendations for students who experience this level of spiritual enlightenment during their coming out process. Therefore, this concept seems to potentially represent a deep convergence of sexual orientation and spirituality that some

LGBQQ college students may experience; this may require professional counselors or student affairs professionals to have additional spiritual competence and spiritual/religious resources.

Quantitative Research Phase

The primary researcher developed and initially validated an instrument (i.e., SSOII), utilizing content validity, exploratory factor analysis, internal consistency, and criterion-related validity. The primary researcher recommends caution in implementing the quantitative results of this study without additional psychometric testing of the SSOII within a larger sample.

Content Validity

Content validity of the SSOII was reviewed by five doctoral-level counselor educators with knowledge of the subject of LGBQQ spiritual development and/or experience in instrument design. Content validity contributed to clearer survey design, improved question wording, and resulted in changes within the demographic section to more accurately reflect literature concerning LGBQQ spirituality.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The SSOII was designed to measure the intersection of sexual orientation and spiritual development in LGBQQ college students. Twenty-three items were retained from the 61 items of the original scale, accounting for 55.53% of the total variance explaining the phenomenon in the sample.

Factor 1, Acceptance vs. Rejection (8 items), represented items describing experiences connected to acceptance or rejection of spiritual/religious identity or sexual orientation. Factor 1 items aligned with literature connecting discrimination (Bryant &

Astin, 2008), as well as spiritual struggle and/or spiritual/religious rejection or acceptance (LePeau, 2007; Love et al., 2005; Rockenbach et al., 2012), to issues impacting the intersection of spirituality and sexual orientation for some LGBQQ college students. Attending to student needs for acceptance of their diverse sexuality and spirituality expressions within the campus and larger community would be important for student affairs and college counseling settings.

Factor 2, Interpersonal Supports and Groups (7 items), represented items describing participation in groups or related interpersonal support factors for sexual orientation or spirituality. Factor 2 items aligned with literature pertaining to the importance of having positive support and group affiliation and/or a sense of belonging during college (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Jenney, 2012; Scott et al., 2011; Stevens, 2004; Taliaferro et al. 2009; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012) in the areas of community and campus spiritual/religious groups and activities, support from spiritual/religious institution administrators, and involvement in public religious duties. Higher scores in these areas indicated higher integration of sexual orientation and spirituality.

Factor 3, Self-Harm Outcomes (8 items), represented items describing negative self-harm (e.g., cutting, substance abuse) or mental health symptoms (e.g. depression, anxiety) due to spirituality or sexual orientation issues during college. Factor 3 items also aligned with literature pertaining to college student populations and their unique psychological and emotional health needs (Jenney, 2012; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012) and connected to suicidality, self-harm, and substance abuse behaviors described by some of the qualitative phase participants at the intersection of

sexual orientation and spirituality. In particular, Jenney (2012) identified spirituality as a potential tool for addressing emotional health for college students and Winkle-Wagner (2012) encouraged spirituality to be incorporated into holistic student development approaches. Other researchers have also positively linked spirituality to the holistic health of college students (Hartely, 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007). Within clinical contexts, proper screening for self-harm and suicidality seems essential when working with LGBQQ college students struggling with their sexual orientation and/or spirituality.

Internal Consistency

Internal consistency for the total scale, before and after EFA, was acceptable (α = .88 and .84, respectively), but alphas for the three extracted factors were not all acceptable (ranging from .64 to .89). Additionally, for the LGBQQ subgroup the extracted factors were not all acceptable, ranging from α = .58 at the lowest (Acceptance vs. Rejection) to α = .89 at the highest (Self-Harm Outcomes).

Criterion-Related Validity

Criterion-related validity was examined by sexual orientation, age of sexual orientation awareness, timing of outness, outness to spiritual/religious groups, and spiritual struggle, controlling for participant age. Of the four criteria analyzed, only one, spiritual struggle, showed some support for criterion-related validity. As noted earlier, previous researchers have demonstrated spiritual struggle as a relevant factor for some heterosexual and college students (Bryant, 2011; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Fisler et al., 2009; LePeau, 2007; Love et al., 2005; Small & Bowman, 201; Rockenbach et al., 2012), and spiritual struggle has been linked to addictions in college students (Faigin et al.,

2014). Results showed that spiritual struggle was present for some participants both related to sexual orientation and/or spirituality. Spiritual struggle is a relevant issue for some college students; however, others navigate changes within spirituality gradually or negotiate the intersection of spirituality and sexual orientation independently of each other.

Demographic Diversity of Sample

A final area of this quantitative phase will be discussed pertaining to the demographic diversity of the sample. Previous literature noted sample diversity, specifically regarding biological sex, gender, and ethnicity, as a goal for spirituality research within college student populations (Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis et al., 2004; Mullikin, 2006; Scott et al., 2011; Soet & Martin, 2007). Although a smaller population than was desired completed the instrument, diversity within the LGBQQ sample had adequate sexual orientation diversity (n= 11 lesbian; n= 23 gay; n= 24 bisexual; n= 5 questioning; n= 6 queer; n= 4 pansexual; n= 4 other). Pertaining to sex diversity in this sample, there was adequate diversity within the sample for females (n= 113) and males (n= 42). The same was true for gender identity (n= 110 feminine; n= 38 masculine; n= 3 Transgender, n= 9 other). While racial/ethnic diversity in this study was low (64% White/European American) most other demographic categories demonstrated adequate diversity. In particular, while the majority of the sample identified with some form of Christianity (approximately 73%) there was broad representation of religious or spiritual identity/affiliation within the sample. Over 50 distinct spiritual identity/affiliations were indicated demographically by participants (e.g., atheist, pagan, Muslim, Buddhist, Catholic, Latter Day Saint, Episcopalian, Mennonite, Jewish).

Integrated Results Summary

When examined alongside previous literature, an integrated view of this study's results highlighted the importance of two key issues connected to the intersection of sexual orientation and spiritual development for LGBQQ college students: spiritual struggle and mental health needs. The concept of spiritual struggle within the LGBQQ college population arose as a relevant issue within both qualitative and quantitative results of this study. Researchers have indicated the presence of spiritual struggle for both LGBQQ and heterosexual college students (Bryant, 2011; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Fisler et al., 2009; LePeau, 2007; Love et al., 2005; Small & Bowman, 201; Rockenbach et al., 2012); however, the source of spiritual struggle may not necessarily be linked with sexual orientation issues. For some individuals in this study, spiritual struggle was absent entirely; yet for other individuals, spiritual struggle issues were connected to grief and loss issues rather than sexual orientation. Qualitative and quantitative results of this study demonstrated spiritual struggle as a relevant concept deserving clinical attention.

For some study participants, spiritual struggle was connected to mental health symptoms (i.e., self-harm, substance abuse, depression). Mental health issues within LGBQQ and heterosexual college populations have been thoroughly documented by researchers (Hartely, 2004; Jenney, 2012; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012), including students experiencing addictive behaviors as a direct result of spiritual struggle (Faigin et al., 2014). It is important to attend to these needs clinically, whether connected to the intersection of spirituality and sexual orientation or other factors, and to implement assessment and treatment tools to address them further. Results of this study indicated

that interpersonal supports or membership in positive campus groups was influential to the sample and could help to mitigate the effects of spiritual struggle and/or mental health symptoms in individuals, which aligns with previous literature concerning supportive factors for college students (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Jenney, 2012; Scott et al., 2011; Stevens, 2004; Taliaferro et al. 2009; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012).

Implications for Counselor Education and Supervision

Results highlight the continued need to emphasize LGBQQ issues and spirituality, and their points of intersection, within counselor education and supervision programs. Such issues as spiritual struggle connected to sexual orientation or spiritual seeking and gradual shifts in spirituality within the populations of this study indicate that college students may be dealing with spiritual and/or sexual orientation issues in college. As relevant clinical issues, counselor education and supervision programs are strongly encouraged to incorporate specific training towards this.

For example, ensuring that the ASERVIC (2009) and ALGBTIC (2009, 2012) competency guidelines for spirituality, sexual orientation, and transgender issues in counseling are taught within counseling and supervision courses is advised. Additionally, counselor education and supervision programs are strongly encouraged to ensure those sections of the ACA Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014) covering spirituality, sexual orientation, and gender identity, as well as those sections dealing with appropriate handling of counselor values, boundaries, and appropriate referral are covered within the curricula. Professional counselors may not make referrals based purely on their own values or beliefs (ACA, 2014), and this point should be thoroughly addressed in all coursework as it pertains to issues of LGBQQ orientation and spirituality.

Methods to accomplish these educational goals could come in the form of concentrated courses in spirituality, sexual orientation, and gender identity topics as well as infusing these topics within core courses and into clinical supervision. The combination approach of specific courses plus cross-curricula infusion has been recommended for infusing multicultural and social justice competencies within counselor education and supervision programs (Sheely-Moore & Kooyman, 2011), and a similar approach is recommended for infusing the ASERVIC (2009) and ALGBTIC (2009, 2012) competencies. In particular, this infusion should lead to awareness, knowledge, and skill development concerning diversity issues (Sheely-Moore & Kooyman, 2011), including LGBQQ and spirituality topics. For example, awareness and knowledge of these topics could come through in class lecturing or discussion of spirituality and sexuality competencies as well as personal reflection on values, beliefs, or biases and immersion activities in which the counselors-in-training engage with different populations (e.g., LGBQQ spiritual individuals, LGBQQ welcoming faith groups) and write journals about these experiences (Sheely-Moore & Kooyman, 2011). Skill development for counselors-in-training would then follow from these earlier awareness and knowledge activities to demonstrate appropriate clinical and supervision skills, such as broaching, with real clients/supervisees or via role playing (Sheely-Moore & Kooyman, 2011).

Counselor education and supervision programs are encouraged to implement methods for program faculty and staff, in addition to all master's and doctoral students, to engage in personal reflection about values, beliefs, and competency surrounding work with sexual orientation and spirituality and points these topics intersect via personal counseling, self-reflection projects, and other methods to foster self-awareness,

knowledge acquisition, and skill development on these issues as professional counselors and/or educators (e.g., interviews of LGBQQ spiritual leaders or counselors).

Implications for College Counselors

Because spirituality and sexual orientation can develop both independently and interdependently for LGBQQ college students, college counselors should be familiar and comfortable using a variety of sexual orientation models (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005; Cass, 1984; Coleman, 1982; King & Biro, 2006; McCarn & Fassinger, 1996; Rhoads, 1997b; Savin-Williams, 1998) as well as the many models of spiritual development (Allport, 1950; Fowler, 1981; Friedman et al., 2010; Underhill, 1961; Washburn, 2003; Wiggins-Frame, 2003; Wilber, 1980, 2000). Professionals are cautioned not to inherently view some models of development (i.e., the scientific models vs. traditional models of spiritual development) as better than other models and to explore the utility and research of the diverse models based upon clinical utility to particular client population needs. Utilizing such models as guides, counselors should recognize the unique developmental characteristics of LGBQQ college students and work to directly incorporate these characteristics into therapy sessions through broaching of diversity topics, including sexual orientation and spirituality. Additionally, counselors are encouraged to become well versed in the related spirituality, sexual orientation, and gender competencies and to become competent in professional ethics within these areas (ACA, 2014; ALGBTIC, 2009, 2012; ASERVIC, 2009), seeking appropriate training, supervision, and consultation to be clinically efficacious professionals where their skills or knowledge are lacking.

Counselors are also recommended to incorporate spiritual assessments (Horton-Parker & Fawcett, 2010; Wiggins-Frame, 2003) within their work with all clients,

including LGBQQ college students, and to become familiar with methods to incorporate spirituality into counseling. Although, not present for every student, some LGBQQ clients still cope with spiritual struggle connected to sexual orientation or other factors (e.g., parental death) and proper assessment of their needs and tools to assist them are necessary. For example, the FACE-SPIRIT model (Horton-Parker & Fawcett, 2010) provides specific guidelines for incorporating clients' spirituality into counseling and psychotherapy, as well as spiritual assessment. Above all, counselors are encouraged to heed clients' interest in spirituality as well as in sexual orientation development and respectfully and professionally infuse these issues throughout counseling sessions, from intake assessment to psychotherapy to termination, and to do so respectfully following ethical guidelines (ACA, 2014). This may also mean recognizing that spirituality and/or sexual orientation are not issues all clients desire to address or integrate in their lives, as well as recognizing that some LGBQQ college students may wish to emphasize and develop other diversity issues, such as race/ethnicity, over the issues of sexual orientation or spirituality. As results of the quantitative phase of this study are tentative, counselors will need to be creative in their clinical exploration with clients and research other resources for treatments and techniques beyond those offered here.

Concerning mental health responses (e.g., self-harm, substance abuse) and the potential linkage between these behaviors and spiritual struggle, sexual orientation, and related clinical issues discussed within this study and other literature (Faigin et al., 2014), it is essential for college counselors to properly assess for the presence of suicidality, self-harm behaviors, depression, anxiety, addictions, or related disorders with LGBQQ students. Concomitantly, college counselors working with any student whose primary

therapeutic issue is depression, anxiety, self-harm, substance abuse behaviors, or a combination of these issues, should assess for underlying issues connected to sexual orientation, spiritual development, or other diverse identity characteristics (e.g., gender identity, race/ethnicity).

Also, proper training of campus mental health advocates and LGBQQ allies (e.g., chaplains, support staff, faculty, administrators) in initial recognition, assessment, and referral for sexual orientation, spirituality, or mental health issues is recommended, as appropriate, for the advocates' campus role. Such training could be part of campus LGBQQ Safe Zone programs or part of campus-wide mental health awareness training. A well trained campus community could be a strong front line for supporting any student experiencing distress related to LGBQQ or other issues. College counselors are also recommended to develop specific campus programs for all of these issues for students and all campus staff and to partner with their student affairs colleagues on programming and training opportunities. Lastly, the efficacious counseling professional strives for competence in areas of spirituality and sexual orientation and knows how and when to properly assess for issues connected to these forces in clients' lives, LGBQQ or otherwise, in addition to other areas of professional competence and does so from a respectful, ethical position seeking consultation, supervision, or additional training when necessary.

Implications for Student Affairs Professionals

In addition to having similar clinical, ethical, assessment, training, and programming requirements as those listed for college counselors above, student affairs professionals are recommended to ensure that all campus-wide programming is inclusive

for LGBQQ college students with regards to sexual orientation and spiritual development. This implication extends to all LGBQQ focused programming, all spiritually-related programming, and extends into education and training needs for faculty, staff, and administrators. For example, many campuses have sexual orientation and gender identity Safe Zone programs; however, those programs may not also address spirituality or religious issues for LGBQQ students, faculty, and staff. Conversely, most campuses have multiple active spiritual development or religious programs on campus (e.g., campus religious/chaplain services, student faith organizations) but those programs may not be inclusive to LGBQQ individuals. Every campus should have spiritually sensitive LGBQQ programming and sexual orientation sensitive spiritual programming so that all students on campus have a room at the table and a space to express their voice connected to the integration of these two identity aspects. Existing cross-inclusive programming could be specifically advertised as such and special programming could be developed to address inclusive needs, such as hosting LGBQQ-supportive spiritual/religious speakers on campus, officially recognizing campus spiritual/religious organizations that are LGBQQ friendly, publically posting campus and community resources of LGBQQ-welcoming spiritual/religious groups on the university website, or providing interfaith, LGBQQ supportive chaplaincy staff and programming to students.

Considering their role on campus, student affairs professionals have an added responsibility to scrutinize and develop campus-wide policies inclusive for LGBQQ students in all areas of student life. This includes examining policies that may be discriminatory to LGBQQ students and ensuring that adequate resources exist for all students desiring of spiritual and/or sexual orientation development throughout every

educational and campus life experience (e.g., within classes, programming, policy, religious services, college counseling center).

Implications for Advocacy

Finally, all college counseling, student affairs, and counselor education professionals are encouraged to engage in advocacy concerning inclusive programming on their campuses for LGBQQ college students and to ensure that these students have a voice in all settings of the college community, including in spiritual and religious activities. Partnering with other campus faculty, staff, and administrators, as well as placing LGBQQ college students in positions of power and seeking their input, are essential functions to expand inclusivity across the campus landscape. For example, ensuring that LGBQQ students are represented on official university committees, boards, and special taskforces concerned with overall campus climate, student affairs/activities, spiritual/religious programming, or with the office(s) of the campus chaplain(s) would encourage advocacy and student agency in campus life decisions. Counseling professionals are also encouraged to utilize their training in program evaluation to assess for LGBQQ friendly spiritual campus environments or programming and advocate for campus-wide inclusivity. Also, colleges that have religious studies majors, minors, or special topics courses in spiritual dimensions (e.g., psychology of religion, spirituality in counseling), should ensure LGBQQ viewpoints are welcome and represented within this coursework and invite LGBQQ students as guest speakers or consult with students, faculty, and staff knowledgeable on LGBQQ spirituality on course syllabi, textbooks, and projects. Improved representation, advocacy, and agency for LGBQQ individuals throughout all aspects of campus life, including spiritual and religious areas, will increase

inclusivity within the campus landscape.

Limitations

Qualitative Research Phase

The qualitative phase of this study had several limitations. Due to snowball sampling, transferability of the qualitative results may be limited to the study sample. Although the sample represented several diversity categories (e.g., gender, sexual orientation), participants overwhelmingly had college connections to the state of Virginia and had limited racial/ethnic diversity (i.e., only African American and White/European American representation). Broader geographical and cultural diversity may have increased transferability in the study. Additionally, the primary researcher knew four participants and was connected to the same university as them. Although this may indicate prolonged engagement, these relationships may have altered the interviews (e.g., socially desirable responses) or influenced data analysis and results.

The primary researcher's personal views on sexual orientation acceptance and his spirituality, beliefs, and group affiliations affected this study from its inception. Despite measures to address these issues his views may have influenced the study. Conversely, the data collection and analysis processes of this study influenced the primary researcher's views on the breadth and depth of LGBQQ spirituality represented by the samples. For example the primary researcher was expecting more connection between spiritual struggle and sexual orientation issues than was located within the samples and was not expecting to see such strong connections between spiritual struggle and clinical mental health issues (e.g., depression, substance abuse) for some participants. These results shifted the primary researcher's awareness of meaningful forces at work in

individuals' lives and caused deeper self-reflection on how he addresses these issues in his professional counseling, educator, and supervisor roles.

Another possible limitation of this study concerned the subjective and conceptual nature of terms used in this study (e.g., spirituality, spiritual struggle) and how these concepts may have intersected with sexual orientation for participants. Consequently, participants may not have been in agreement with the definitions or the influences of these concepts upon their lives. Other potential limitations included the possibility of utilizing a sample size that was inadequate to explore the phenomenon in question, low member checking responses from participants, failure to recognize patterns within the data, or creating research questions that could not be answered by participants. Also, usage of a research team throughout the study may have been useful in this study to address potential limitations in research methods, data analysis, or interpretation of results. Additional limitations could relate to only one interview being conducted with each participant or interviews being too short to fully explore the phenomenon.

Attempts to mitigate these limitations were made by the primary researcher. For example, sampling size for the phenomenology (N= 10) was within accepted parameters for this research tradition (Creswell, 2006; Morse, 1995, 2000), and thick description was utilized in describing the phenomenon under study. The primary researcher worked to mitigate other limitations through strategies such as sensitively conducting interviews, permitting participants the opportunity to member check transcripts or add comments via memos or journals, bracketing of his assumptions and biases, and the usage of an independent auditor to oversee data analysis. However, limitations are difficult to remove entirely and would be present in any study this primary researcher conducts in the future.

Quantitative Research Phase

The quantitative phase of this study also had several limitations. Considering it was based on a phenomenology with limited geographical and ethnic diversity, the developed instrument may not have accurately or comprehensively reflected the phenomenon under study for a larger population. Specifically, as indicated by power estimates, the instrument did not have a large enough LGBQQ sample to verify results and to utilize those results clinically without additional psychometric testing. While a total sample of 171 was large enough following the rule of 150 (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999) and shows utility for some of the results, other guidelines for EFA suggest a 5:1 or 10:1 sample to variable ratio (see Okolo, 1990). Thus, for 61 initial items, a sample size over 300 would have been minimally desirable. Furthermore, although some comparison between LGBQQ and heterosexual current and former college students was desirable, 49% (n= 83) of the sample identified as heterosexual leaving an LGBQQ sample of only 77 participants, making EFA an ineffective analysis to draw solid conclusions from the revised SSOII for this population.

The length of the original SSOII may also be a limitation. Indeed, 290 participants began the study, but only 171 completed it (58% completion rate). At 61 items for the original SSOII, the survey was likely too long for many participants to complete. Unknown limitations stemming from other instrument distribution problems, data collection issues, or design errors (e.g., potentially testing unrelated constructs, question wording, online testing software failure) may exist. These issues could have influenced participants' responses and instrument completion.

Additional limitations included the lack of a confirmatory factor analysis or a

replication analysis, the potential replicability issues of the EFA, or other errors that led to reliability issues for the instrument. Limitations may have included subject effects of participants giving answers they believed were expected or unknown bias within the sample, such as bias from participants having overly negative or overly positive experiences with spirituality/religion, or bias from participants feeling the SSOII was intrusive (i.e., 11 participants did not complete demographics for the instrument). While this phase of the study was distributed through multiple national networks, diversity could have been broader (e.g., 60% of participants were White/European American). Again, while a larger sample of LGBQQ participants was desired, 49% of respondents were heterosexual, potentially limiting results of this study further.

Concerning reliability, the SSOII was inconsistent for the study's primary population of interest. Several uncontrollable factors could have contributed to lower reliability in the instrument, such as testing environment issues (i.e., due to online distribution testing conditions were unknown), inaccurate measures for the primary construct, unrelated constructs being measured within the instrument, or differences within the participant sample, such as unknown generational differences effecting sexual orientation, spirituality, or their integration. Not having an equivalent test for comparison of the intersection of sexual orientation and spirituality in LGBQQ college students may also have contributed to lower reliability within this study. Steps should be taken to address potential factors contributing to low reliability, such as testing the SSOII within a larger LGBQQ population using both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis or having a smaller amount of items, before results of this scale can be considered reliable for LGBQQ college students.

Content validity issues of the SSOII may have been connected to unrelated constructs being measured within the instrument or too many experiences being measured at once. Clearer operationalization of the construct may be needed in future iterations of the SSOII and it may be beneficial to have a more specialized panel of expert reviewers with greater knowledge of LGBQQ spirituality.

Poorer criterion-related validity may be related to not comparing the scale to the correct criteria or to enough criteria. For example other criteria such as religiosity, spiritual/religious congruence, religious upbringing, or gender identity, which were not examined, may have demonstrated support for criterion-related validity. Poorer criterion-related validity could also be related to small sample size or a less representative sample than was needed to study the construct. Also, there may be criteria missing from the instrument that impact the construct, such as potential generational influences or missing behavioral or affective components influencing sexual orientation and/or spiritual development integration. Additional testing of the SSOII is needed to better examine criterion-related validity factors that discern scores for integration of sexual orientation and spirituality as well as to verify support for spiritual struggle as a valid criterion.

Pertaining to sample diversity, the study could have benefitted from more sex and gender identity diversity, including more participants with non-binary sex characteristics (n= 5). While transgender individuals were not the focus of this study, literature has indicated spirituality research for transgender and other non-binary gender identifying college students is lacking and deserving of needed research attention (Scott et al., 2011). Also, even more balance and diversity within spiritual identity/affiliation would be beneficial in other studies on LGBQQ spirituality.

Other limitations included possible bias from expert reviewers or the absence of an important context not evident from the literature or phenomenology used in developing the SSOII (Heppner et al., 2008). The primary researcher's own inexperience with the research methods is also a limitation of this study. Given these limitations, results may be difficult to generalize to a larger population beyond this study and should not be utilized until further testing and verification of results has been done. In addition to those listed here, there may be other quantitative or qualitative limitations of this study, such as limitations in self-report in both study phases, not known to the primary researcher.

Future Research Directions

The purpose of this exploratory sequential mixed methods study was to qualitatively examine the lived experiences of LGBQQ college students pertaining to how, if at all, their sexual orientation influenced their spirituality and to quantitatively explore results within a larger population. A primary goal of future studies will be a continued expansion of literature on this topic and advocacy for more inclusion of LGBQQ voices in studies concerning spirituality and in particular for college students. To this end, additional qualitative and quantitative research would be beneficial.

Qualitatively, future research would benefit from exploring the intersection of spirituality and sexual orientation with greater racial/ethnic, spiritual/religious, or geographical diversity, as well as ethnographic research with international students and first generation immigrants. For example, while participants within the phenomenology had diverse spiritual expressions at the time of their interviews, all experienced some form of a Christian upbringing and had connections to Virginia. Including more

individuals with diverse faith heritage (e.g., Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, atheist, unchurched) and individuals from different national or international backgrounds may produce different results. Also, as the influence of religiosity and/or conservative theologies was significant for some participants, additional targeted qualitative research with LGBQQ individuals at conservative or fundamentalist religious colleges may add to the literature. Such research may benefit from working in conjunction with sexuality and gender researchers affiliated with conservative religious institutions so as to gain better access to research stakeholders. While this study specifically looked at the influence of sexual orientation on spirituality, it is important to include gender identity and connected factors (e.g., transgender, intersexuality, asexuality) in future qualitative research. In particular, Scott et al. (2011) have noted gaps in the literature concerning the unique needs of transgender college students. Future qualitative research may also explore different interview methods (i.e., focus groups), other research traditions (e.g., grounded theory), or examine intersections of spirituality and sexual orientation for current students or across generations.

Quantitatively, future research would also benefit from increased racial/ethnic and faith diversity, as well as focus on the influence of gender identity and related factors and the experiences of international and first generation immigrant populations. As was evident from demographic terminology indicated by participants on the SSOII, non-binary definitions for sexual orientation and gender identity (e.g., bisexual panromantic, gender queer, gender fluid) may be outpacing the literature and deserve focused attention within spirituality research to explore this terminology and those who identify accordingly. In addition to these goals, two future research objectives are the creation of

an integration model for spiritual development and sexual orientation in college students and concrete guidelines for college counseling professionals to implement that will promote the healthy integration of spirituality and sexual orientation for LGBQQ students. This research would entail additional psychometric research on the instrument, in particular within a larger LGBQQ population, using exploratory factor analysis as well as confirmatory factor analysis. In particular, the SSOII needs additional testing (e.g., construct validity, test-retest reliabilty) before it can be utilized as a valid tool for assessing the integration of spirituality and sexual orientation for college students.

Conclusion

This study has broadened the dialogue on college student spirituality to be inclusive of LGBQQ voices, highlighted special factors that LGBQQ college students need for their spiritual and sexual orientation development, examined additional needs of students with multiple identity characteristics, and provided suggestions for college counselors and student affairs professionals, and their training, working with spirituality and sexuality for college students. Findings also demonstrate the continued need for expansion of LGBQQ voices within spiritual development research, qualitatively and quantitatively, to fully understand this phenomenon and adequately develop inclusive tools and treatment guidelines for this population. Directly partnering with LGBQQ college students in this research, as well as college counselors and student affairs professionals, would add to future studies. The results of this study and implications for future research present a framework to begin the next stages of scholarship towards the healthy integration of sexual orientation and spirituality in LGBQQ college students.

CHAPTER SIX

MANUSCRIPT

Initial Development and Validation of the Sexual Orientation and Spirituality Integration Instrument

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Abstract

The authors describe the initial development and psychometric testing of the Sexual Orientation and Spirituality Integration Instrument (SSOII), a measure to assess the integration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning (LGBQQ) sexual orientation with spiritual development for college students. Initial instrument development and psychometric information obtained from content validity, exploratory factor analysis, reliability, and validity of the SSOII is presented.

Keywords: sexual orientation, spirituality, integration, instrument

Initial Development and Validation of the Sexual Orientation and Spirituality Integration Instrument

Spirituality among college students has become a topic of academic interest (Fisler et al., 2009; Hartley, 2004), with a growing body of literature noting the salience of exploring associations between spirituality and the college experience for students (Astin, Astin, and Higher Education Research Institute, 2003; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis, Muller, Miller, & Banerjee, 2004; Hartley, 2004; Lindholm, 2007; Rockenbach, Walker, & Luzander, 2012). Furthermore, spiritual struggle (i.e., crisis of faith) is a relevant factor to many college students (Bryant, 2011; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Fisler et al., 2009; LePeau, 2007; Love, Bock, Jannarone, & Richardson, 2005; Small & Bowman, 201; Rockenbach et al., 2012). Despite this growing interest in college student spirituality research, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning (LGBQQ) individuals are often overlooked (Lindholm, 2007; Robertson, 2010). Although some researchers identified the importance of including LGBQQ individuals in studies of spirituality, most examine adults without taking into account college experience (Kocet, Sanabria, & Smith, 2011; LePeau, 2007; Rodriguez & Follins, 2012).

Although the LGBQQ population is often overlooked in scholarship about spirituality, researchers over the past decade have built strong cases for inclusion of spirituality in student affairs programming to promote holistic health for college students (Dennis et al., 2004; Holmes, Roedder, & Flowers, 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms, Hutchins, Hutchins, & Pursley, 2007). This emphasis has occurred due to the positive benefits of religion and spirituality and their link to improved mental and physical health in terms of trauma coping, self-esteem, depression, anxiety, suicidality,

substance abuse (Koenig, 2012). Further research over the last 25 years has demonstrated how a positive sexual orientation identity is associated with improved psychological health for individuals (Golub, Rendina, & Gameral, 2012; Leserman, DiSantostefano, Perkins, & Evans, 1994; King & Smith, 2004; Miranda & Storms, 1989; Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2011). These positive health outcomes primarily link to psychological adjustment and a stronger and more open sexual orientation expression (Golub et al., 2012; Leserman et al., 1994; King & Smith, 2004; Miranda and Storms, 1989; Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2011). Obversely, recent research by Faigin, Pergament, and Abu-Riaya (2014) found college freshmen experiencing spiritual struggle frequently utilized addictive behaviors (e.g., alcohol, illegal and prescription drugs, sex, shopping, caffeine, gambling, tobacco, and work) to cope with resulting existential and emotional distress.

Professional counselors have several guidelines encouraging competence with spiritual and sexual orientation issues of all clients, including college populations (Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling, 2012; Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling, 2009) as well as ethical guidelines forbidding client referrals based purely on counselor values or beliefs (American Counseling Association, 2014). Combined, these guidelines provide specific credence to the arguments of Kaplan (2014) and Whitman and Bidell (2014) that all professional counselors must be prepared to assist any client with their spirituality and sexual orientation needs.

Looking specifically at college students, there is a clear interest in spiritual development and an existing support network at most colleges to address their spiritual

(Schmalzbauer, 2013) and LGBQQ needs (Campus Pride, 2013). For example, Schmalzbauer (2013) reported roughly 250,000 college students actively participated in Protestant campus religious ministries, 1,351 Catholic campus ministries, 361 Jewish ministries, and over 500 Muslim campus organizations at American colleges nationwide (Schmalzbauer, 2013). Combined with over 400 colleges in America offering LGBQQ student organizations (Campus Pride, 2014) and over 500 campus leaders providing resources to LGBQQ students nationwide (Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals, 2013), strong evidence exists to focus research on sexual orientation and spirituality within the LGBQQ college student population.

Due to their routine omission and marginalization from literature surrounding spiritual development, there continues to be a need to include more voices of LGBQQ students within literature pertaining to spiritual development during college (Lindholm, 2007; Robertson, 2010). This study involves initial development and validation of the Sexual Orientation and Spirituality Integration Instrument (SSOII), which assesses the integration of LGBQQ sexual orientation with spiritual development in college students. This study examined the following research questions: (a) what is the content validity evidence of the SSOII; (b) what are the initial factors associated with the SSOII as indicated by exploratory factor analysis; (c) what is the internal consistency of the SSOII; and (d) what is the criterion-related validity of the SSOII as evidenced by the total score and high integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development?

Method

Instrument Development

To develop the initial items for the original 61 item SSOII, the authors conducted

a review of literature and a phenomenology (N= 10) examining how sexual orientation potentially intersected with spiritual development in LGBQQ former college students (Author, 2015). In particular, initial items concerned the influence of factors such as spiritual struggle, the coming out process, and the impact of multiple identities for LGBQQ students (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Bryant, 2011; Gold & Stewart, 2011).

Participants and Procedures

Participants consisted of current and former college students including heterosexual individuals, which would permit comparison with an LGBQQ sample. Requests were solicited through online listservs, social networks, personal contacts, directly through LGBQQ and counseling organizations (e.g., CESNET-L, Gay Christian Network, Campus Pride, BiNet USA, GLAAD), and a metropolitan community LGBT center and university in a southeastern state where the researchers resided at the of the study. Data were collected using an online survey tool and included a cover letter, informed consent form, list of terms and definitions, the SSOII, and a demographic sheet. After two months of data collection with six follow-ups, 290 participants began the study and 171 completed it (58% completion rate).

Of the 160 current or former college students who reported demographic information, there were 113 females (66.1%), 42 males (24.6%), one intersex individual (.6%), 2 Two Spirit individuals (1.2%), and 2 other (1.2%; i.e., *CAFAB*, *Demigirl*). Ages ranged from 19 to 64 (M= 33.18, MD= 30, SD= 11.76). Approximately 19% (n= 32) of the sample was Black/African American, .6% (n= 1) Hispanic/Latin American, .6 % (n= 1) Native American or First Nations, 4% (n= 6) Asian American, 60% (n= 103) White/European American, 7% (n= 12) multiracial, and 3% (n= 5) other (e.g.,

Guyanese/West Indian, Jewish). The sample reported gender identity as approximately 22% (*n*= 38) masculine, 64% (*n*= 110) feminine, 2% (*n*= 3) transgender, and 5% (*n*= 9) other (e.g., agender, gender fluid, gender queer). Concerning sexual orientation, approximately 6% (*n*= 11) identified as lesbian, 14% (*n*= 23) gay, 14% (*n*= 24) bisexual, 3% (*n*= 5) questioning, 4% (*n*= 6) queer, 49% (*n*= 83) heterosexual, 2% (*n*= 4) pansexual, and 2% (*n*= 4) other (e.g., gay female, bisexual panromantic, neutral). The age of awareness of sexual orientation ranged from 1 to 33 (*M*= 12.93, *MD*= 14, *SD*= 6.09)

For participants reporting spiritual or religious identity/affiliation prior to college comprising 2% or more of the sample (9% no affiliation, *n*= 16), approximately 15% (*n*= 16) identified as Christian, 10% (*n*= 10) Roman Catholic, 9% (*n*= 16) Baptist, 9% (*n*= 16) Catholic, 4% (*n*= 6) Presbyterian, 4% (*n*= 6) Southern Baptist, 4% (*n*= 6) United Methodist, 4% (*n*= 6) nondenominational Christian, 3% (*n*= 5) Lutheran, 3% (*n*= 5) Pentecostal Christian, 2% (*n*= 4) evangelical Christian, 2% (*n*= 4) LDS/Mormon. For participants reporting current spiritual or religious identity/affiliation at the time of the study comprising 2% or more of the sample (19% no affiliation, *n*= 32), approximately 17% (*n*= 29) identified as Christian, 5% (*n*= 8) Baptist, 4% (*n*= 7) Episcopalian, 4% (*n*= 7) nondenominational Christian, 4% (*n*= 7) spiritual but not religious, 4% (*n*= 6) agnostic, and 3% (*n*= 5) Buddhist. Although a majority identified with some form of Christianity (approximately 73%), the sample contained more than 50 distinct spiritual identity/affiliations indicated (e.g., atheist, pagan, Muslim, Buddhist, Catholic, Latter Day Saint, Episcopalian, Mennonite, Jewish).

Data Collection Methods

Instrument. The SSOII is a 61 item instrument designed to explore within a

larger sample results from a previous phenomenology concerning the potential influence sexual orientation or other factors had on the spiritual development of current or former college students (Author, 2015). Items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5), with higher scores indicating greater influence of a particular factor or greater agreement with a component of identity development.

Demographics. In addition to the SSOII, the authors developed a 17 question demographic questionnaire. This questionnaire assessed for personal identifiers (e.g., age, biological sex, race/ethnicity, relationship status), sexuality and gender identifiers (e.g., sexual orientation, gender identity, age of sexual orientation awareness), spiritual identifiers (e.g., spiritual or religious affiliation before or after college), as well as several questions pertaining to timing of public outness and college degree status and completion. The authors developed demographic questions from the earlier phenomenology (Author, 2015), previous literature, and with input from five expert reviewers.

Results

Content Validity

The authors addressed content validity for the SSOII through expert review by five experts in the field of counseling with knowledge of the subject of spiritual development within LGBQQ populations and/or experience in instrument design. The expert reviewers for the SSOII included three women and two men, each of whom was a doctoral-level counselor educator. Ages ranged from 29 to 52 (M= 29.6, MD= 31, SD= 9.42). Each identified as White/European American. One identified as gay and four

identified as heterosexual. Reviewer's reported their spiritual/religious identity as (a) "Catholic raised, currently confused;" (b) "Christian/Protestant;" (c) "Christian/Protestant/Episcopalian;" (d) "very spiritual, sort of religious (Episcopal);" (e) "Christian, Buddhist, panentheist."

The experts reviewed an initial 33 item draft of the SSOII for conceptual agreement with the purpose and research questions of the study, match to the final codebook, and coverage of the literature. Following the review, the authors changed the survey design to create a finalized 61 item instrument that reflected the source material more fully and had a uniform item design. The initial draft utilized a combination of Likert scaling and check box items. The check box items compressed many codes and sub-codes from the source phenomenology into single item check boxes with multipart sub-categories. After the review, the authors converted all items to Likert scaling, resulting in the increase from 33 to 61 items. Changes also included rewording and clarity of items to the finalized SSOII.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The authors ran an EFA to examine underlying factors to retain in a revised version of the SSOII. According to the rule of 150 (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999), with a sample of 171 participants this study was appropriate for EFA. The authors conducted a preliminary analysis of the output, investigating the *R*-matrix to remove items with correlations below .30 and above .90 to ensure an acceptable determinant value (see Field, 2013); 38 items were removed resulting in 25 items. The authors then conducted the EFA again and found the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < .001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was acceptable (.88), indicating

the data were appropriate for EFA. Communalities ranged from .40 to .77 for the items.

Using principal axis factoring and promax rotation methods, the authors identified factors with extracted eigenvalues greater than 1. Two factors were removed leaving 23 final items in the revised version of the SSOII. Of the initial five extractions, a three-factor solution appeared most interpretable for the remaining 23 items after EFA. The two removed factors accounted for only 5.2% of the variance, and these items were removed due to cross loadings or for low total variance. Results showed the remaining three factors accounted for 55.53% of the total variance.

Using .30 as the factor loading criteria, 23 of the original items loaded on one of the three factors. Factor 1 (Acceptance vs. Rejection; eigenvalue= 9.11), containing 8 items, accounted for 30.35% of the total variance. These items represented experiences connected to acceptance or rejection of spiritual/religious identity or sexual orientation; a sample item is "A rejection of my faith due to my sexual orientation." Factor 2 (Interpersonal Supports and Groups; eigenvalue= 6.43), containing 7 items, accounted for 21.44% of the total variance. These items represented participation in groups or related interpersonal supportive factors for sexual orientation or spirituality; a sample item is "Participation in community spiritual/religious groups (e.g. off campus groups such as YMCA or Salvation Army)." Factor 3 (Self-Harm Outcomes; eigenvalue= 1.12), containing 8 items, accounted for 3.74% of the total variance. These items represented negative self-harm (e.g., cutting) or mental health symptoms (e.g. depression, anxiety, substance abuse) due to spirituality or sexual orientation during college; a sample item is "Drug or alcohol abuse as a result of my sexual orientation."

Internal Consistency

Cronbach's alphas for the original 61 item instrument were acceptable for the total scale (.88) and for each subgroup of participants (LGBQQ = .88; heterosexual = .89). Following the EFA, Cronbach's alpha for the revised 23 item instrument was acceptable at .84. With the exception of three items, corrected item-total correlations ranged from .23 to .66, with a mean corrected item-total correlation of .42. Cronbach's alphas for the revised SSOII by factors (subscales) were as follows: Acceptance vs. Rejection (.64), Interpersonal Supports and Groups (.89), and Self-Harm Outcomes (.84). For the total scale by subgroups following EFA, Cronbach's alphas were acceptable (LGBQQ = .88; heterosexual = .82). Furthermore, Cronbach's alphas for individual factors by subgroups following EFA were: Acceptance vs. Rejection (LGBQQ= .63; heterosexual= .58), Interpersonal Supports and Groups (LGBQQ= .88; heterosexual= .88), Self-Harm Outcomes (LGBQQ= .89; heterosexual= .89).

Criterion-Related Validity

To provide initial criterion-related validity evidence, the authors correlated the total scale of the 23 item SSOII with reported ratings of integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development. Specifically, the authors conducted a series of ANCOVAs to examine the associations between integration of sexual orientation and spirituality with several demographic variables, controlling for participant age.

Sexual orientation and age of awareness. The authors conducted an ANCOVA to examine the relationship between age of awareness, sexual orientation, and total SSOII score, controlling for participant age. Levene's statistic was significant (F= 1.961 [40, 105], p=.003); however, Field (2013) states the ANCOVA is a robust enough test to

overcome this violation of assumptions. There was not a significant interaction effect for the variables (F= .679, *p*= .79, partial η^2= .08, P= .40). Results indicated, however, there was a main effect between sexual orientation and the total SSOII score (F= 12.830 [1, 104], p=. 001, partial η^2= .11, P= 94).

Timing of outness. The authors conducted a second ANCOVA to explore the association between timing of outness and total SSOII score, controlling for participant age. Levene's statistic was non-significant (F= .299 [1, 158], p= .59). There was not a significant relationship between timing of outness and total SSOII score (F= .182 [1, 158], *p*= .67, P= .07, partial η^2= .001). Thus, when a participant came out about their sexual orientation (i.e., before, during, after college, or never) did not indicate differences in degree of sexual orientation and spirituality integration.

For the LGBQQ sub-set, timing of outness was also not significant (F= .001 [1, 75], *p*= .972, P= .05, partial η^2< .001). In addition, Levene's test was not significant (F= .015 [1, 75], *p*= .904). When examining three LGBQQ sub-groups (i.e., outness before college, before and during college, or after college and never), there was not a significant relationship between the total SSOII score and participants who came out before college (F= .527 [2, 74], *p*= .769, partial η^2= .007, P= .09). Levene's test was not significant (F= .009 [2, 74], *p*= .991).

Outness to spiritual/religious group. The relationship between participants reporting their sexual orientation to their spiritual/religious groups during college and the degree of integration of sexual orientation and spirituality (i.e., total SSOII score) was not significant for the total sample (F= .433[1, 75], *p*= .512, partial η^2= .006, P= .10), when controlling for participant age. Levene's statistic was not significant (F= .047 [1, 75], *p*=

.830). When looking at the LGBQQ subset (M= .29, SD= .46), there was not a significant relationship between the total SSOII score and outness to spiritual/religious group (F= 10.032 [6, 145], p= .132, P= .623, partial η^2= .065). Levene's test was not significant (F= 2.866 [14, 145], p= .001).

Discussion

The purpose of the SSOII is to measure the intersection of sexual orientation and spiritual development in LGBQQ college students. Content validity using five doctoral-level counselor educators contributed to clearer survey design, improved question wording, and resulted in changes within demographics to more accurately reflect literature concerning LGBQQ spirituality. The retained 23 items from the 61 original items accounted for 55.53% of the total variance explaining the phenomenon in the sample and were categorized along three factors.

Factor 1, Acceptance vs. Rejection, represented items describing experiences connected to acceptance or rejection of spiritual/religious identity or sexual orientation. Factor 1 items aligned with literature connecting discrimination (Bryant & Astin, 2008), and/or spiritual/religious rejection or acceptance (LePeau, 2007; Love et al., 2005; Rockenbach et al., 2012), to issues impacting the intersection of spirituality and sexual orientation for some LGBQQ college students. Attending to student needs for acceptance of their diverse sexuality and spirituality expressions within the campus and larger community would be important for student affairs and college counseling settings.

Factor 2, Interpersonal Supports and Groups, represented items describing participation in groups or related interpersonal support factors for sexual orientation or spirituality. Factor 2 items aligned with literature pertaining to the importance of having

positive support and group affiliation and/or a sense of belonging during college (Abes & Kasch, 2007; Jenney, 2012; Scott et al., 2011; Stevens, 2004; Taliaferro et al. 2009; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012) in the areas of community and campus spiritual/religious groups and activities, support from spiritual/religious institution administrators, and via involvement in public religious duties.

Factor 3, Self-Harm Outcomes, represented items describing negative self-harm (e.g., cutting) or mental health symptoms (e.g. depression, anxiety, substance abuse) due to spirituality or sexual orientation issues during college. Factor 3 items also aligned with literature pertaining to college student populations and their unique psychological and emotional health needs (Jenney, 2012; Taub & Servaty-Seib, 2008; Winkle-Wagner, 2012) and connected to suicidality, self-harm, and substance abuse behaviors described by participants within the prior phenomenology. In particular, Jenney (2012) identified spirituality as a potential tool for addressing emotional health for college students and Winkle-Wagner (2012) encouraged spirituality to be incorporated into holistic student development approaches. Other researchers have also positively linked spirituality to the holistic health of college students (Hartely, 2004; Nagel & Sgoutas-Emch, 2007; Nelms et al., 2007).

Internal consistency for the total scale, before and after EFA, was acceptable (α = .88 and .84, respectively), but alphas for the three extracted factors were not all acceptable (ranging from .64 to .89). Additionally, for the LGBQQ subgroup the extracted factors were not all acceptable, ranging from α = .58 at the lowest (Acceptance vs. Rejection) to α = .89 at the highest (Self-Harm Outcomes). Thus, this scale had inconsistent reliability for the study's primary population of interest. Having a larger

population for the study or having a smaller amount of items may have improved the test's reliability.

Finally, Criterion-related validity was examined via a series of ANCOVAs, controlling for participant age, by demographic variables for sexual orientation, age of sexual orientation awareness, timing of outness, and outness to spiritual/religious groups. Results indicated there was only a main effect between sexual orientation and the total SSOII score of those factors examined. However, this result demonstrated that individuals experiencing spiritual struggle had increased integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development. Thus, spiritual struggle may benefit the integration process for some individuals, rather than serve as a detractor from integration.

Previous literature noted sample diversity, specifically regarding biological sex, gender, and ethnicity, as a goal for spirituality research within college student populations (Bryant & Astin, 2008; Dennis et al., 2004; Mullikin, 2006; Scott, Belke, & Barfield, 2011; Soet & Martin, 2007). Although a smaller population than was desired completed the instrument, diversity within the LGBQQ sample had adequate sexual orientation diversity (n= 11 lesbian; n= 23 gay; n= 24 bisexual; n= 5 questioning; n= 6 queer; n= 4 pansexual; n= 4 other). Pertaining to sex diversity in this sample, there was adequate diversity within the sample for females (n= 113) and males (n= 42). The same was true for gender identity (n= 110 feminine; n= 38 masculine; n= 3 Transgender, n= 9 other). While racial/ethnic diversity in this study was low (64% White/European American) most other demographic categories demonstrated adequate diversity. In particular, while the majority of the sample identified with some form of Christianity (approximately 73%) there was broad representation of religious or spiritual identity/affiliation within the

sample. Over 50 distinct spiritual identity/affiliations were indicated demographically by participants (e.g., atheist, pagan, Muslim, Buddhist, Catholic, Latter Day Saint, Episcopalian, Mennonite, Jewish).

Limitations

This study had several limitations. Considering it was based on a phenomenology with limited geographical and ethnic diversity, the developed instrument may not have accurately or comprehensively reflected the phenomenon under study for a larger population. Specifically, as indicated by power estimates, the instrument did not have a large enough LGBQQ sample to verify results and to utilize those results clinically without additional psychometric testing. While a total sample of 171 was large enough following the rule of 150 (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999) and shows utility for some of the results, other guidelines for EFA suggest a 5:1 or 10:1 sample to variable ratio (see Okolo, 1990). Thus, for 61 initial items, a sample size over 300 would have been minimally desirable. Furthermore, although some comparison between LGBQQ and heterosexual current and former college students was desirable, 49% (n= 83) of the sample identified as heterosexual leaving an LGBQQ sample of only 77 participants, making EFA an ineffective analysis to draw solid conclusions from the revised SSOII for this population.

The length of the original SSOII may also be a limitation. Indeed, 290 participants began the study, but only 171 completed it (58% completion rate). At 61 items for the original SSOII, the survey was likely too long for many participants to complete. Unknown limitations stemming from other instrument distribution problems, data collection issues, or design errors (e.g., potentially testing unrelated constructs, question

wording, online testing software failure) may exist. These issues could have influenced participants' responses and instrument completion.

Additional limitations included the lack of a confirmatory factor analysis or a replication analysis, the potential replicability issues of the EFA, or other errors that led to reliability issues for the instrument. Limitations may have included subject effects of participants giving answers they believed were expected or unknown bias within the sample, such as bias from participants having overly negative or overly positive experiences with spirituality/religion, or bias from participants feeling the SSOII was intrusive (i.e., 11 participants did not complete demographics for the instrument). While this study was distributed through multiple national networks, diversity could have been broader (e.g., 60% of participants were White/European American). Again, while a larger sample of LGBQQ participants was desired, 49% of respondents were heterosexual, potentially limiting results of this study further.

Concerning reliability, the SSOII was inconsistent for the study's primary population of interest. Several uncontrollable factors could have contributed to lower reliability in the instrument, such as testing environment issues (i.e., due to unknown online distribution or testing conditions), inaccurate measures for the primary construct, unrelated constructs being measured within the instrument, or differences within the participant sample, such as unknown generational differences effecting sexual orientation, spirituality, or their integration. Not having an equivalent test for comparison of the intersection of sexual orientation and spirituality in LGBQQ college students may also have contributed to lower reliability within this study. Steps should be taken to address potential factors contributing to low reliability, such as testing the SSOII within a

larger LGBQQ population using both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis or having a smaller amount of items, before results of this scale can be considered reliable for LGBQQ college students.

Content validity issues of the SSOII may have been connected to unrelated constructs being measured within the instrument or too many experiences being measured at once. Clearer operationalization of the construct may be needed in future iterations of the SSOII and it may be beneficial to have a more specialized panel of expert reviewers with greater knowledge of LGBQQ spirituality.

Poorer criterion-related validity may be related to not comparing the scale to the correct criteria or to enough criteria. For example other criteria such as spiritual/religious congruence, religious upbringing, or gender identity, which were not examined, may have demonstrated support for criterion-related validity. Poorer criterion-related validity could also be related to small sample size or a less representative sample than was needed to study the construct. Also, there may be criteria missing from the instrument that impact the construct, such as potential generational influences or missing behavioral or affective components influencing sexual orientation and/or spiritual development integration. Additional testing of the SSOII is needed to better examine criterion-related validity factors that discern scores for integration of sexual orientation and spirituality.

Pertaining to sample diversity, the study could have benefitted from even more sex and gender identity diversity, including more participants with non-binary sex characteristics (n= 5). While transgender individuals were not the focus of this study, literature has indicated spirituality research for transgender and other non-binary gender identifying college students is lacking and deserving of needed research attention (Scott

et al., 2011). Also, even more balance and diversity within spiritual identity/affiliation (e.g., more non-Christians) would be beneficial in other studies on LGBQQ spirituality.

Other limitations included possible bias from expert reviewers or the absence of an important context not evident from the literature or phenomenology used in developing the SSOII (Heppner et al., 2008). The authors own inexperience with the research methods is also a limitation of this study. Given these limitations, results may be difficult to generalize to a larger population beyond this study and should not be utilized until further testing and verification of results has been done. In addition to those listed here, there may be other limitations of this study, such as limitations in self-report, not known to the authors.

Future Research Directions

Future research of the SSOII would benefit from increased ethnic and faith diversity as well as focus on the influence of gender identity and related factors. As was evident from demographic terminology indicated by participants on the SSOII, non-binary definitions for sexual orientation and gender identity (e.g., bisexual panromantic, gender queer, gender fluid) may be outpacing published literature and deserve focused attention within spirituality research to explore this terminology and those who identify accordingly. In addition to these goals, future research objectives include the creation of an integration model for spiritual development and sexual orientation in college students and concrete guidelines for college counselors to implement that will promote the healthy integration of spirituality and sexual orientation for LGBQQ students. This research would entail additional psychometric research on the instrument within a larger LGBQQ population using exploratory factor analysis as well as confirmatory factor analysis.

Although, the SSOII needs additional testing (e.g., construct validity, test-retest validity, confirmatory factor analysis) before it can be utilized as a valid tool for assessing the integration of spirituality and sexual orientation for college students, testing of this instrument highlighted a potentially beneficial linkage between spiritual struggle and integration of these two forces. A more psychometrically supported tool would be used to assess the integration of sexual orientation and spiritual development in college students and could assist counselors when treating this population towards healthy integration.

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Appendix A: Phase 1 Demographic Questionnaire

Age: _____

Gender Identity: Female Male Transgender Other not specified: _____

Race/Ethnicity: African American Asian American Hispanic Native American

White/European American Biracial/Multiracial Other not specified: _____

Sexual Orientation: Bisexual Gay Lesbian Heterosexual Questioning

Asexual Other not specified: _____

Relationship Status: Single Partnered/Married Divorced Widowed

How "out" are you publically about your sexual orientation? (Circle as many as apply):

To no one Friends Family Coworkers Religious Group Out to everyone

Age you enrolled in your first college degree program: _____

Highest Degree Completed: Associates Bachelors Masters

Educational Specialist Doctorate

Current Educational Status: Associates Bachelors Masters

Educational Specialist Doctorate

Please Indicate your Current Religious or Spiritual Identity/Affiliation, if any (can be multiple)-

Please Indicate your Religious or Spiritual Identity/Affiliation, if any, prior to first college enrollment (can be multiple)-

Appendix B: Phase 1 Final Code Book

Code	Description	Sub-Code(s) or Scaling
College Success	High achievement, recognition and enjoyment of college	
Group Affiliation	Formal/official secular organizational and group identification	Academic, Campus, Community
Spiritual/Religious Affiliation	Personal identification with a particular spiritual or religious group, denomination, or system of belief that may change during or after college	
Sexual Orientation	Sexual orientation awareness as LGBQQ or heterosexual	Pre-College, College, Present
Spiritual/Religious Upbringing	Family of origin religious/spiritual identification and involvement or heritage	
Spiritual/Religious Identity	Personal religious or spiritual identification status on a spectrum	Pre-College, College, Present
Individual Development	Growth and transformation experiences on a spectrum	Personal, Spiritual
Sexual Orientation Acceptance	Discovery and acceptance process concerning sexual orientation on a spectrum, may involve questioning or doubt by self or others (low/medium/high)	Self, Family, Peers
Sexual Orientation Rejection	Rejection process concerning sexual orientation on a spectrum, may involve questioning or doubt by self or others (low/medium/high)	Self, Family, Peers
Spiritual/Religious Identity Acceptance	Acceptance process concerning spiritual/religious identity on a spectrum, may involve questioning or doubt by self or others (low/medium/high)	Self, Family, Peers

Spiritual/Religious Identity Rejection	Personal identification as religious or spiritual on a spectrum (low/medium/high)	Self, Family, Peers
Belonging	Feeling of acceptance by peers/others within various settings on a spectrum	Campus, Community, Spiritual or Religious
Spiritual Struggle or Crisis	Responding to events/experiences with dramatic spiritual struggle or crisis. In extreme may lead to faith loss or sexual orientation denial	
Personal Faith Practices	Personal religious practices such as prayer, scripture reading, attending church etc., that may be shared in a community setting or done alone	Campus, Community
Public Faith Duties	Public religious duties or roles such as choir director, playing music, leading a service, or performing some other ministry activity	Campus, Community
Institutional Support	Support provided overtly by an institution	College, Spiritual or Religious
Peer Support	Support provided informally by peers	Campus, Spiritual or Religious, Community
Discrimination Concerns	Behavior encountered that directly refutes, rejects, or harms a person due to their sexual orientation or causes fear of such behavior	
Spiritual/Religious Congruence	The level of "fit" an individual feels within a particular religious/spiritual group	Low/Medium/ High
Identity Compartmentalization	Disconnection of one's religious orientation identity from one's sexual orientation identity, or separate selves	
Identity Integration	Interconnection of one's spiritual/religious identity with one's sexual orientation into an integrated self view	

Outness Level	The level of public openness individuals have concerning sexual orientation	Low/Medium/ High
Extracurricular Campus Cultural Activity	Informal participation in extracurricular campus cultural activities beyond coursework	
Academic Activity	Experiences related to college coursework	
Personal/Family Tragedy	Experiences connected to personal/family tragedies, such as death or illness, and the after effects	Push Towards Spirituality, Push Away from Spirituality
Spiritual Seeking	Personal exploration for a new spiritual/religious identity and/or community	Active, Inactive
Early Awareness of Orientation	Having an awareness of sexual orientation at a young age, in some cases prior to puberty	
Mental Health or Stress Response	Experiences resulting in negative responses such as depression, anxiety, suicidality, destructive behaviors (e.g., drugs, cutting), and/or related responses	Sexual Orientation, Spiritual or Religious, Academic, Relationship, Unknown
LGBQQ Mentorship	Formal mentorship by an out LGBQQ professional (e.g., teacher, supervisor)	
Freedom & Independence	Having the ability to explore new ideas (e.g., spiritual/religious, sexual, political) due to the freedom and independence of the college environment (an internal process)	
Coming Out As Sacrament	The coming out process as an enlightening spiritual experience or leading to such a spiritually transcendent experience	
Racial/Ethnic College	Recognition that racial/ethnic makeup	

Influence	and affiliation with racial/ethnic based groups during college had more influence upon their identity than their sexual orientation; in some cases making conscious choices to emphasize race or ethnicity over sexual orientation during college
Interfaith Campus Diversity & Ministry	Exposure to faith diversity through personal connections and interfaith ministry on campus
Safe Zone Training	Influence of campus Safe Zone trainings (i.e., sexual orientation and gender) or related programs

Appendix C: Qualitative Phase Informed Consent

Project Title:
A Mixed Methods Study of the Intersection of Minority Sexual Orientation and Spiritual Development in the College Experience

The purpose of this research is to explore how, or if participants' Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, (LGB) sexual orientation influenced their spiritual development during their college experience. In other words, this research study is interested in the experiences and other factors that affected the participants' spiritual development during their college student stage of life as it intersected with their LGB identification, as well as other factors effecting spiritual development beyond and in addition to LGB identification.

If you participate in this research, you will be asked to participate in individual interviews regarding your experiences, and other factors, pertaining to the research topic. Generally, this includes things such as providing demographic information, sharing opinions and attitudes, or participating in measures of academic achievement. It will include being audio-taped for research purposes.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you as the subject. There will be no personal benefits to you from your participation in this research. However, the results of the research may contribute to the field of professional Counseling regarding the nature and use of spiritual development issues for LGB college students.

Your participation in the interviews will take approximately 30-45 minutes. The duration of this research project is 4/29/14 to 5/31/15.

Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary. You may refuse to participate at all, or choose to stop your participation at any point in the research without fear of penalty or negative consequence.

The information/data you provide for this research will be treated confidentially, and all raw data will be kept in a secured file by the researcher. Results of the research will be reported as aggregate summary data only, and no individually identifiable information will be presented unless explicit permission is given to do so.

You also have the right to review the results of the research if you wish to do so. A copy of the results may be obtained by contacting the researcher.

Participant consent

I, (print full name)_____, have read and understand the foregoing information explaining the purpose of this research and my rights and responsibilities as a subject. My signature below designates my consent to participate in this research, according to the terms and conditions listed above.

Signature _____
Date_____

I, (print full name)_____, give the researcher permission to use, publish, and republish, in the context of this research audio reproductions of my voice made for this study.

Signature _____
Date_____

Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Kevin C. Snow, M.S., M.A.
Doctoral Student and Graduate Teaching Assistant
Secretary, Chi Sigma Iota-Omega Delta Chapter
Managing Editor, *Encyclopedia of Theory in Counseling and Psychotherapy*
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Appendix D: College Spirituality and Sexuality Experiences Survey

The purpose of this survey is to explore sexuality and spirituality experiences you are having now or have had in the past while enrolled in a bachelor's or associates degree in college (either at a 4 year traditional, 2-4 year community or technical, or distance learning college). The focus of this survey is on experiences and supports you are having now or have had in the past during your college phase of life, including experiences you had within your community, home life, or other settings off campus during your first college degree enrollment (regardless of whether you graduated).

Are you a current or former college student? Yes No

Informed Consent

To participate in this research, you will be asked to complete this on line survey. Your information will be electronically recorded following completion and submission of the instrument. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you as the participant. There will be no personal benefits to you from your participation in this research. However, the results of the research may contribute to the field of professional counseling. Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary. You may refuse to participate, or choose to stop your participation at any point in the research without penalty or negative consequences.

The information/data you provide for this research will be treated confidentially, and all raw data will be kept in a secured file by the researcher. Results of the research will be reported as aggregate summary data only, and no individually identifiable information will be presented unless explicit permission is given to do so. You also have the right to review the results of the research if you wish to do so. A copy of the results may be obtained by contacting the researcher.

By participating in the study you acknowledge you have read and understand the foregoing information explaining the purpose of this research and your rights and responsibilities as a participant. Your completion of the instrument, in part or in whole, indicates your consent to participate in this research, according to the terms and conditions listed above.

Participation in the survey will take 15 to 20 minutes.

Thank you for your participation!

Danica Hays, Ph.D. (Responsible Project Investigator)
Kevin C. Snow, M.S., M.A. (Primary Researcher)
Department of Counseling and Human Services
Old Dominion University

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should contact Dr. Ed. Gomez, Chair, DCOE Human Subjects Review Committee, Old Dominion University 757-683-6309. If you have any questions about the survey itself, please feel free to contact Kevin Snow at ksnow003@odu.edu

Clicking next below grants your consent and takes you to the survey

Definition of Terms

The following terms are specific to this survey.

****Please read these terms before taking the survey****

Sexual Orientation is the romantic or sexual attraction an individual has to the opposite sex, same sex, or both sexes. These orientations frequently go by common terms such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning (LGBQQ), heterosexual, or additional terminology such as asexual (i.e., no sexual attraction) or pansexual.

Coming out process is the process of becoming publically open about one's sexual orientation to people within one's life.

Spiritual and/or religious practices include activities individuals do as part of their spiritual or religious expression such as prayer, attendance at a church or mosque, fasting, meditation, scriptural reading and many other activities.

Spiritual struggle is a process that leads individuals to doubt, abandon, or alter their spiritual or religious identity or views on spirituality in a substantive way due to negative experiences, knowledge, or challenges.

Religious identity is a personal affiliation or institutional self-identification with a particular religion or religious group/denomination and related religious practices, such as Christian, Muslim, Mormon, Lutheran, or any other religious or faith group and their religious practices.

Spiritual identity is a person's spiritual sense of self, personal definition as a spiritual being, and spiritual practices and/or experience(s).

Spirituality is a person's efforts to find meaning, purpose, genuineness, and self-transcendence. Spirituality also involves self-awareness and personal exploration, usually involves connection to others, and may or may not incorporate a sense of a higher power, God, or larger force beyond the individual.

Spiritual and/or religious development is the interest and activity level a participant has in faith, belief, religion, or spirituality and/or exploration of the meaning and purpose of one's life through shared experiences within a community interested in spiritual or religious matters or in the personal exploration of spirituality and/or religion;

it can be viewed as a developmental process.

Click next to continue to the survey.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please respond to the following items based on your FIRST college experience (either current or in the past; either undergraduate or associates level).

For each of the following items, please respond based on how much you agree using the following scale that you have/had the following experiences in college:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I have/ had the following experiences during college:

1. Academic success (e.g., high GPA, dean's list, academic awards, scholarships).
2. Social success (e.g., making good friendships, positive participation in campus organizations, enjoying campus social events).
3. Spiritual success (e.g., positive spiritual or religious development).
4. Spiritual struggle(s) due to my sexual orientation.
5. Spiritual struggle(s) due to my spiritual or religious identity.
6. Spiritual struggle(s) due to a personal tragedy (e.g., a serious illness, significant relationship loss, death of a friend).
7. Spiritual struggle(s) due to a family tragedy (e.g., a death, injury, or serious illness of close family member).
8. A sexual orientation distinct from my spiritual or religious identity.
9. Sense of belonging within my spiritual or religious community/group.
10. Sense of belonging on my college campus.
11. Sense of belonging in my community (off campus).
12. Desire for a new spiritual or religious identity (i.e., a different religion).
13. Desire for a more tolerant spiritual or religious community (within the same religion).
14. Freedom within the college environment for my spiritual and/or religious development to grow.
15. Spiritually/religiously enlightening or transcendent coming out process.
16. A racial/ethnic identity more influential than other cultural identities.
17. A stronger spiritual or religious identity as a result of my sexual orientation.
18. A stronger sexual orientation as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.
19. A rejection of my faith due to my sexual orientation.
20. A rejection of my sexual orientation as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.

21. Less participation in my faith community as I accepted my sexual orientation more.
22. Seeking out new relationships accepting of my sexual orientation.
23. Seeking out new relationships accepting of my spiritual or religious identity.
24. Mental health symptoms (e.g., depression, anxiety) as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.
25. Suicidal thoughts or actions as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.
26. Drug or alcohol abuse as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.
27. Self-harm behaviors (e.g., cutting, burning) as a result of my spiritual or religious identity.
28. Mental health symptoms (e.g., depression, anxiety) as a result of my sexual orientation.
29. Suicidal thoughts or actions as a result of my sexual orientation.
30. Drug or alcohol abuse as a result of my sexual orientation.
31. Self-harm behaviors (e.g., cutting, burning) as a result of my sexual orientation.
32. Ability to cope better with stress/mental distress due to my spiritual or religious identity.
33. Ability to cope better with stress/mental distress due to my sexual orientation.
34. Discrimination based upon my sexual orientation.
35. Discrimination based upon my spiritual or religious identity.
36. I accepted my sexual orientation.
37. My family accepted my sexual orientation.
38. My college peers accepted my sexual orientation.
39. My community (off campus) peers accepted my sexual orientation.
40. My spiritual or religious community accepted my sexual orientation.
41. I accepted my spiritual or religious identity.
42. My family accepted my spiritual or religious identity.
43. My college peers accepted my spiritual or religious identity.
44. My community (off campus) peers accepted my spiritual or religious identity.
45. A family spiritual or religious identification growing up (i.e., parents and siblings and/or extended family raised within a spiritual community or religion).
46. A personal spiritual or religious identification prior to entering college.
47. A personal spiritual or religious identification while attending college.
48. Support from my campus administrators and leaders (e.g., within programming, through official sponsorship of activities or groups).
49. Support from my spiritual/religious administrators and leaders (e.g., within programming, through official sponsorship of activities or groups).
50. Participation in academic-related extracurricular campus groups (e.g., honor societies, clubs related to major or minor fields of study).

51. Participation in social/arts/athletic extracurricular campus groups (e.g., sports/athletics, music and arts clubs, social groups, or a fraternity/sorority).
52. Participation in campus extracurricular spiritual/religious groups (e.g., Muslim Student Association, Hillel, Young Life).
53. Participation in official campus church or religious services (i.e., attended campus chapel, temple, mosque, or synagogue sponsored officially by college).
54. Participation in community (off campus) church or religious services (i.e., attended a community chapel, temple, mosque, or synagogue).
55. Participation in campus sexual orientation (LGBQQ) awareness and ally training (i.e., SAFE Zone training).
56. Participation in community service/social clubs off campus (e.g., Rotary International, Elks Club).
57. Participation in community spiritual/religious groups (e.g. off campus groups such as YMCA or Salvation Army).
58. Participation in interfaith campus diversity and ministry groups (e.g. interfaith programming, workshops, trips, pilgrimages, worship).
59. Participation in campus cultural/ethnic activities (e.g., African dance group, Asian Pacific American Student Union, Indian Students Organization)
60. Participation in personal spiritual/religious practices (e.g., prayer, meditation, scripture reading done alone).
61. Participation in public spiritual/religious practices (e.g., formal role(s) as choir director, playing music, teaching, preaching, or other leadership functions).

Demographics

Directions- Please complete or check the following items in reference to your demographic information.

1. **Age:** _____

2. **Sex:**
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Intersex
   d. Two Spirit
   e. Other: _____

3. **Gender Identity:**
   a. Masculine
   b. Feminine
   c. Transgender

d. Other : _____

4. **Race/Ethnicity:**
    a. Black/African American
    b. Hispanic/Latin American
    c. Native American or First Nations
    d. Asian American
    e. Pacific Islander
    f. White/European American
    g. Multiracial
    h. Other : _____

5. **Sexual Orientation**:
    a. Lesbian
    b. Gay
    c. Bisexual
    d. Questioning
    e. Queer
    f. Heterosexual
    g. Pansexual
    h. Other : _____

6. **Age of awareness of sexual orientation: _____**

7. **Relationship Status:**
    a. Single
    b. Partnered or Married
    c. Divorced
    d. Widowed
    e. Other : _____

8. **When did you come out publically about your sexual orientation, if you did at all?**
    a. Prior to entering college
    b. During college (associates or bachelor level)
    c. After college
    d. I have never come out publically

9. **To whom were you out to publically about your sexual orientation prior to entering college? (Check as many as apply):**

a. To no one
b. Friends
c. Family
d. Coworkers
e. Spiritual/Religious Group
f. Out to everyone
g. Other : _____

10. At college, how out are/were you publically about your sexual orientation? (Check as many as apply):

a. To no one
b. Friends
c. Family
d. Coworkers
e. Spiritual/Religious Group
f. Out to everyone
g. Other : _____

11. Currently, to whom are you out to publically about your sexual orientation? (Check as many as apply):

a. To no one
b. Friends
c. Family
d. Coworkers
e. Spiritual/Religious Group
f. Out to everyone
g. Other : _____

12. At what age did you <u>enroll</u> in your <u>first</u> (e.g., Bachelors or Associates) college degree program: _____

13. What is the highest degree you <u>completed:</u>

a. High School Diploma
b. Associates
c. Bachelors
d. Masters
e. Educational Specialist
f. Doctorate

14. What kind of college do/did you attend for your first college degree?

a. A traditional 4-year college (e.g., a state college, public research university, or private college)
b. A 2 to 4 year community/junior college (e.g., Tidewater Community College)
c. A 2 to 4 year technical college (e.g., Pennsylvania College of Technology)
d. A completely distance learning college (e.g., Walden University, University of Phoenix)
e. A hybrid distance learning school requiring on-campus residency for a week or more each term
f. Other : _____

15. If you are currently enrolled in college what degree are you enrolled in:

a. Associates
b. Bachelors
c. Masters
d. Educational Specialist
e. Doctorate
f. Not applicable/Not currently enrolled

16. If you had any religious or spiritual identity/affiliation prior to attending college (i.e., within your family growing up or yourself personally), please specify what the religious or spiritual identity/affiliation was. You may indicate more than one thing. If you had none please write none.

Specify: _____

17. If you currently have any personal religious or spiritual identity/affiliation, please specify what the religious or spiritual identity/affiliation is. You may indicate more than one thing. If you have none, please write none.

Specify: _____

Please click next to complete the survey.

VITA

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Counselor Education, Old Dominion University	5/2015
M.S. Community Counseling, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania	5/2005
M.A. American Studies, Penn State Capital College	12/2004
B.S. Sociology, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania	5/1998

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA

Darden Dissertation Fellow	8/2014-5/2015
Instructor in Human Services Program	8/2012-8/2014
Graduate Teaching Assistant	8/2012-8/2014
Director of the ODU Student Training Clinic	8/2012-5/2013

PUBLICATIONS

Snow, K.C. (2013). The importance of advocacy and advocacy competencies in human service professions. *Journal of Human Services, 33,* 5-19.

Hays, D. G., Snow, K., & Pusateri, C. (2015). Violence, abuse, and trauma in family therapy. In D. Capuzzi & M. D. Stauffer (Eds.), *Foundations of couples, marriage, and family counseling (pp. 419-447).* New York, NY: Wiley.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Counseling Association
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Issues in Counseling
Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
Chi Sigma Iota International